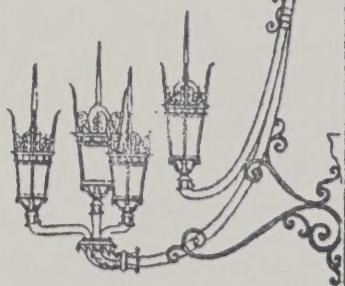


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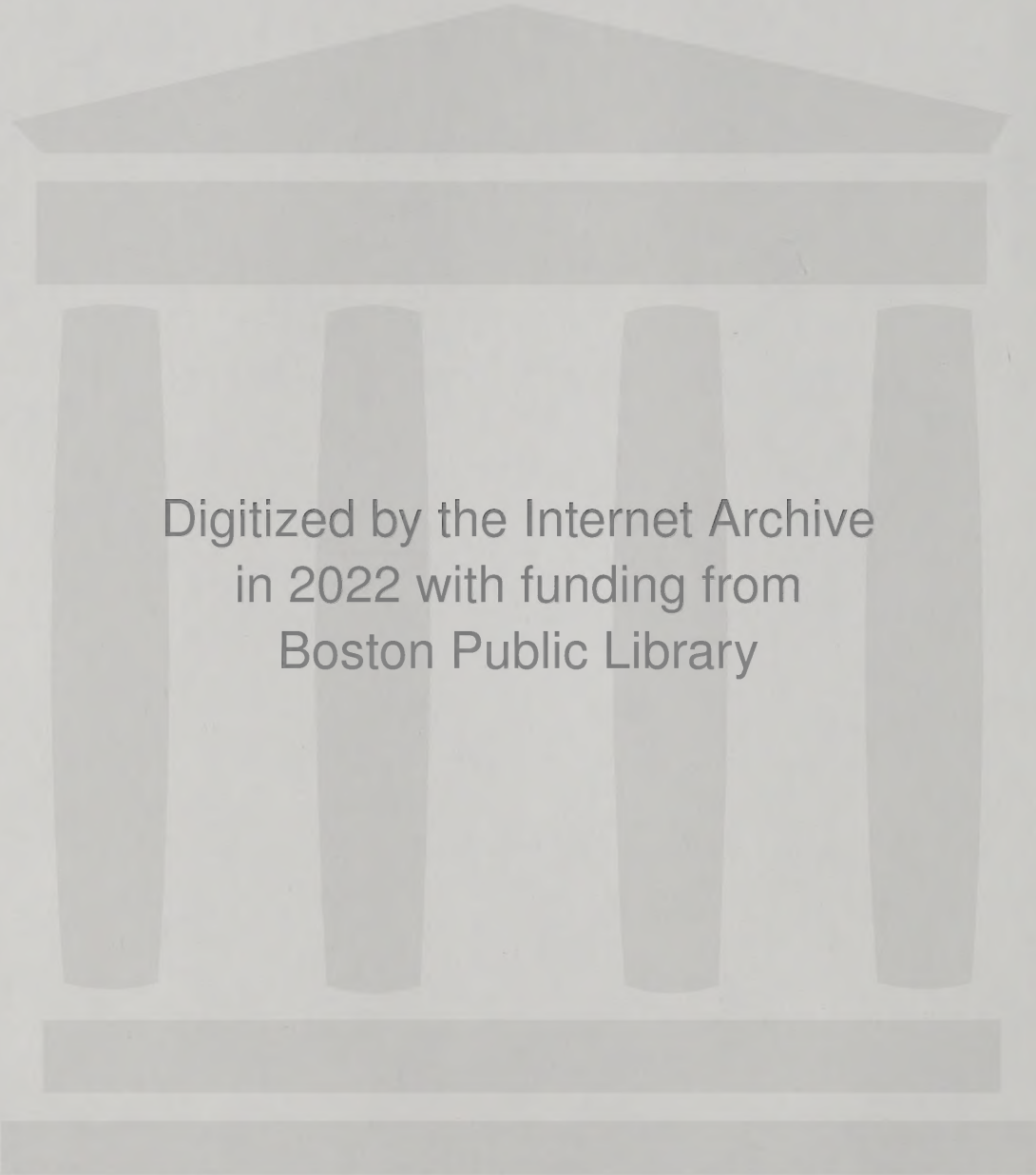
Prepared By

Building Conservation Associates, Inc.
66 Church Street
Dedham, MA 02026

BCA Team

Raymond Pepi
Andrea Gilmore
Jessica Sloop Effress
Tom Wallace
Richard Guy Wilson, Consultant

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Acknowledgements

In the preparation of the Boston Public Library Historic Structure Report, the staff of Building Conservation Associates, Inc. received invaluable assistance from various persons and institutions, without which the research would not have been possible. Primarily, BCA would like to thank the Trustees, administration, and staff of the Boston Public Library for accommodating the various requests for information and resources. Katherine Dibble, Supervisor of Research Library Services, and John Dorsey, Research Library Assistant, were especially helpful in finding resources within the Library's collections. The staff of the BPL Rare Books Room provided assistance with correspondence files and the BPL Papers collection. In addition, the majority of photographs provided in the appendices of this report were found with the help of the BPL Print Department staff.

In addition, BCA would like to thank Mary Beth Betts, Curator of Architecture at the Department of Prints, Photographs, and Architecture, New York Historical Society for her assistance with the McKim, Mead & White Archive materials and Manuscript collection. Finally, Dan Kaney, Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University helped to provide important McKim and Guastavino drawings used in the research.

William Barry and David Bliss of Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott have contributed resources in the form of time and information regarding their work in the 1990s restoration of the McKim Building. They have also provided some of the drawings found throughout the Historic Structure Report. David Hollenberg of the National Park Service, has also contributed knowledge and oversight throughout the research process.

1.0 Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The Boston Public Library is a grand Renaissance Revival building, designed by Charles Follen McKim, and built between 1888 and 1895. Conceived as a “palace for the people”—“built by the people of Boston” and “open to all”—the Boston Public Library exemplifies Boston’s 19th century public spirit of municipal pride and philanthropy. McKim’s design for the Library, inspired by the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve in Paris, heralded the rebirth of Classical Revivalism in America. His embellishment of the building with the paintings of John Singer Sargent, Pierre Puvis de Chavannes and Edwin Abbey, and the sculptural work of Louis and Augustus St. Gaudens and Daniel Chester French, integrated art and architecture in a precedent setting masterpiece unrivaled in its time.

McKim’s Boston Public Library is square in plan, measuring 225-feet long, 227-feet deep, and 70-feet high (from the sidewalk to the cornice). It is three stories on the front elevation and seven on the rear (the grand stories in the front of the building are divided to accommodate stacks in the rear, see fig. H-9). The exterior walls are constructed with Milford granite and the hipped roof is sheathed with terra cotta tiles. The principal (east) facade of the Library, which faces Dartmouth Street and Copley Square, has a rusticated first story and a second story comprised of an arcade of thirteen arched windows (figs. E-29, CE-1). Three ornately carved arches at the center of the east elevation form the Library’s main entrance. The arched openings are filled with wrought iron gates and pairs of bronze doors that were designed by Daniel Chester French. Wrought iron light fixtures are mounted on the sides of the entry arches, and bronze sculptures by Bela Pratt stand on granite pedestals on either side of the entrance. A low granite seat extends across the entire length of the building.

The second story arches are filled with wooden window sash, configured in a Roman grille pattern. Below each window are stone panels with a single window at their center. In the window panels above the entry arches, there are three seals: one of the Library, one of the City of Boston and one of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The other panels are inscribed with the names of great writers, artists and scientists. In the spandrels between the arches there are stone medallions, carved by Domingo Mora, commemorating the printing trade. Above the arcade is a narrow frieze inscribed with the mission of the Library, and above the frieze is the granite cornice. The cornice consists of a row of carved lions heads, topped with a bronze cheneau. The ridge of the roof was originally trimmed with a copper cresting and copper finials at the corners.

The wall treatment of the east (Dartmouth Street) elevation is repeated on the north (Boylston Street) elevation. The three arched openings in the first story of the Boylston

Street elevation originally served as a porte cochere. In 1902, this use was abandoned, and the eastern two arches were reconstructed to function as windows in the new Periodical Room. The third arched opening continued to provide access from Boylston Street to the first floor Periodical Room and Patent Library and to the second floor Lecture Hall and Children's Room. Use of the Boylston Street entrance was abandoned in 1968. The Copley Square subway kiosk, built in 1912, stands in front of the east and center arches. The Boylston Street arcade has seven arches, but unlike the Dartmouth Street elevation, the Boylston Street arches are not filled with large windows. They are wholly or partly filled with Levanto marble and small windows reflecting the interior configuration (fig. E-40).

On Blagden Street, the south elevation, the rusticated first story and arcade extend for six arches, to the entrance for the administrative offices and stacks. Beyond this entrance, the south wall is devoid of architectural ornamentation and the fenestration consists of six stories of small windows that provide light to the stacks. (fig. E-30).

The west exterior wall of McKim's Boston Public Library was originally intended to be granite; however, when land could not be purchased to make this an independent wall, it was constructed with brick. Brick was less costly and deemed more easily altered for future expansion. The west wall has now been completely covered over by the Johnson Building.

The plan of the McKim building is organized around an interior court. On the first floor, the Library is entered through a broad and low entry hall, whose vaulted ceiling is covered with a marble mosaic. The Entry Hall provides access to the original Catalogue Room, Receiving and Ordering Department, Periodical Room, and the interior court. Book-stacks are located at the southwest corners of the first floor, second floors and both entresols.

The Grand Staircase Hall, which ascends from the Entry Hall, is framed by a massive marble arch (fig. I-6). The stair runs straight to a landing, where it splits, and a double stair ascends to the second floor corridor. The Grand Staircase Hall is constructed with yellow Siena marble, and its walls are decorated with the mural paintings of Pierre Puvis de Chavannes.

The second floor of the McKim building contains its grand public spaces. Bates Hall, the public reading room, is a two-story barrel arched space that extends the full length of the east elevation of the building. The walls in Bates Hall are constructed of Amherst sandstone and its ceiling has ornate plaster coffers. The thirteen windows of the east elevation arcade provide ample natural daylight for the Reading Room. The second floor also houses the original Delivery Room, decorated with the wall paintings of Edwin Abbey,

the original Children's Room and Patent Rooms, and the original Lecture Hall. As on the first floor, the book-stacks are located in the southwest corner.

The third floor of the McKim building houses the Special Libraries and the Sargent Gallery. The Sargent Gallery is reached by a set of stairs leading from the Venetian Lobby on the second floor and provides access to the Special Libraries that encircle the interior court.

Since its completion in 1895, the Boston Public Library has been enlarged with two additions. The first addition, called the Annex, was designed by Joseph McGinnis and built in 1918. It was a five story brick building on Blagden Street.¹ It housed the Branch, Printing, and Shipping Departments, the Bindery, and additional stack space. In 1968, the Annex was demolished, and the Johnson Building was constructed. The Johnson Building is a monumental modern granite structure, designed by Philip Johnson. It maintains the roof height and profile of the McKim Building, but is devoid of exterior architectural ornamentation and interior artwork, creating a stark contrast between the two buildings. The Johnson Building currently houses the Library's circulating collection, a large lecture hall, and the Library's administrative offices (figs. E-55 to E-58).

This Historic Structure Report is for the 1895 McKim, Mead & White building. The 1918 Annex and the Johnson Building will only be discussed within the context of their impact on the McKim building, particularly with regard to the changes in use of interior space generated by the construction of these buildings.

This Historic Structure Report for the McKim building traces its architectural history. It explores the derivation of McKim's design, the building's original construction, alterations made to the building since its opening in 1895, and the current restoration being undertaken under the direction of Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott Architects (SBRA). A brief section also outlines Preservation & Maintenance Guidelines for the future care of the building. The report does not include the analysis of the historic building fabric for purposes of comparative dating or the development of treatment recommendations. Nor does it contain specific design or restoration recommendations.

The appendices contain reproductions of historic photographs, original McKim, Mead & White drawings, a list of existing BPL drawings, original Contract Documents and Specifications, and other important primary source documentation used throughout the research. In addition, the appendices contain a reproduction of Herbert Small's, 1895 edition of the *Handbook for the Boston Public Library*, five technical studies prepared for the restoration work, and recommendations for future research and conservation of this documentation.

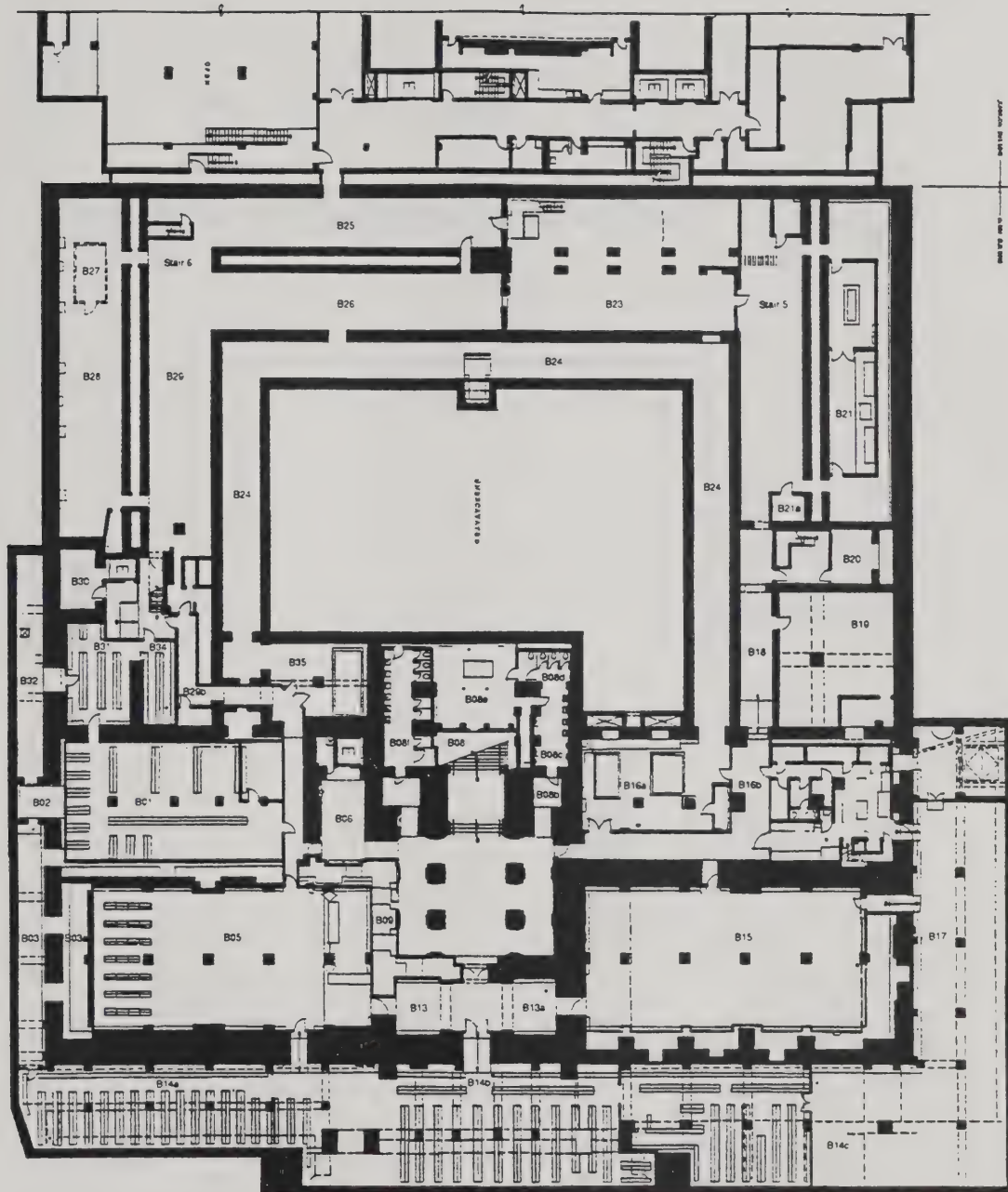
Room numbers have been assigned to spaces in the McKim building by Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott for the 1990s Restoration. These room numbers are used throughout this report to identify rooms in both the historic and restoration sections. The following floor plans illustrate project room numbers.

The following abbreviations (in alphabetical order) have been used in the report and appendices:

A, C & G	Ames, Child & Graves
A & G	Ames & Graves
BCA	Building Conservation Associates, Inc.
BPL	Boston Public Library
F & G	Fox & Gale
HSR	Historic Structure Report
MMW	McKim, Mead & White
NYHS	New York Historical Society
SBRA	Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott
SPNEA	Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities

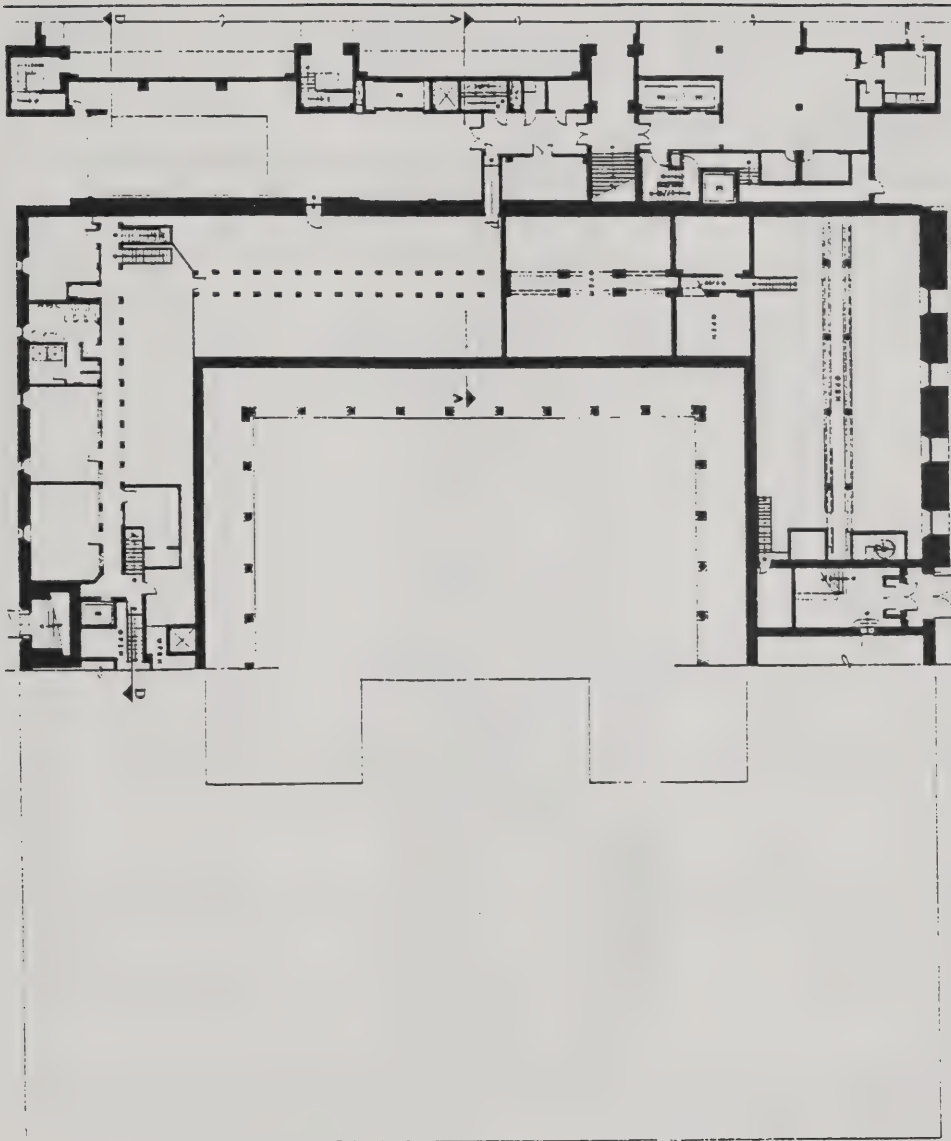
Basement

N →



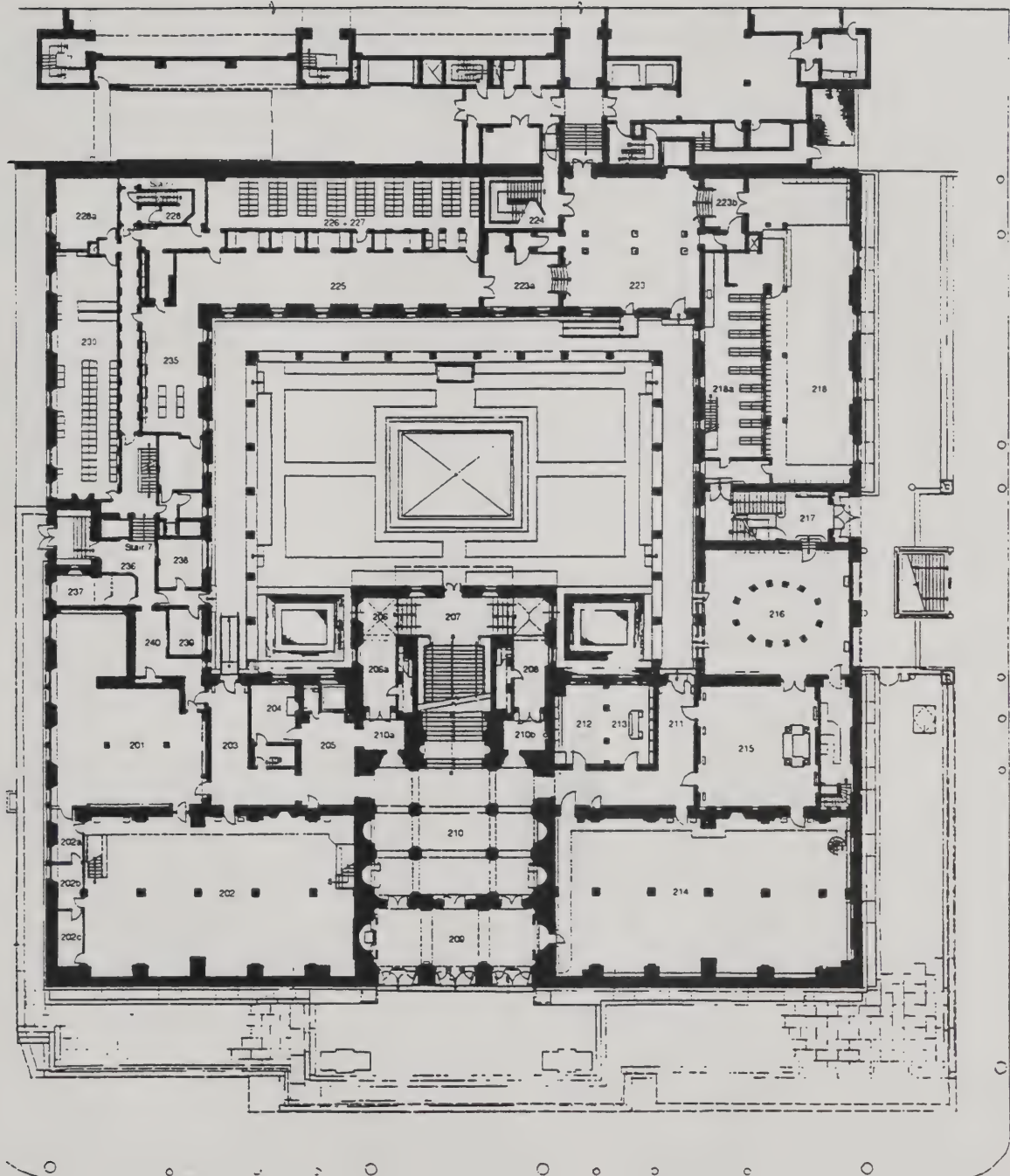
Stack 1

N →



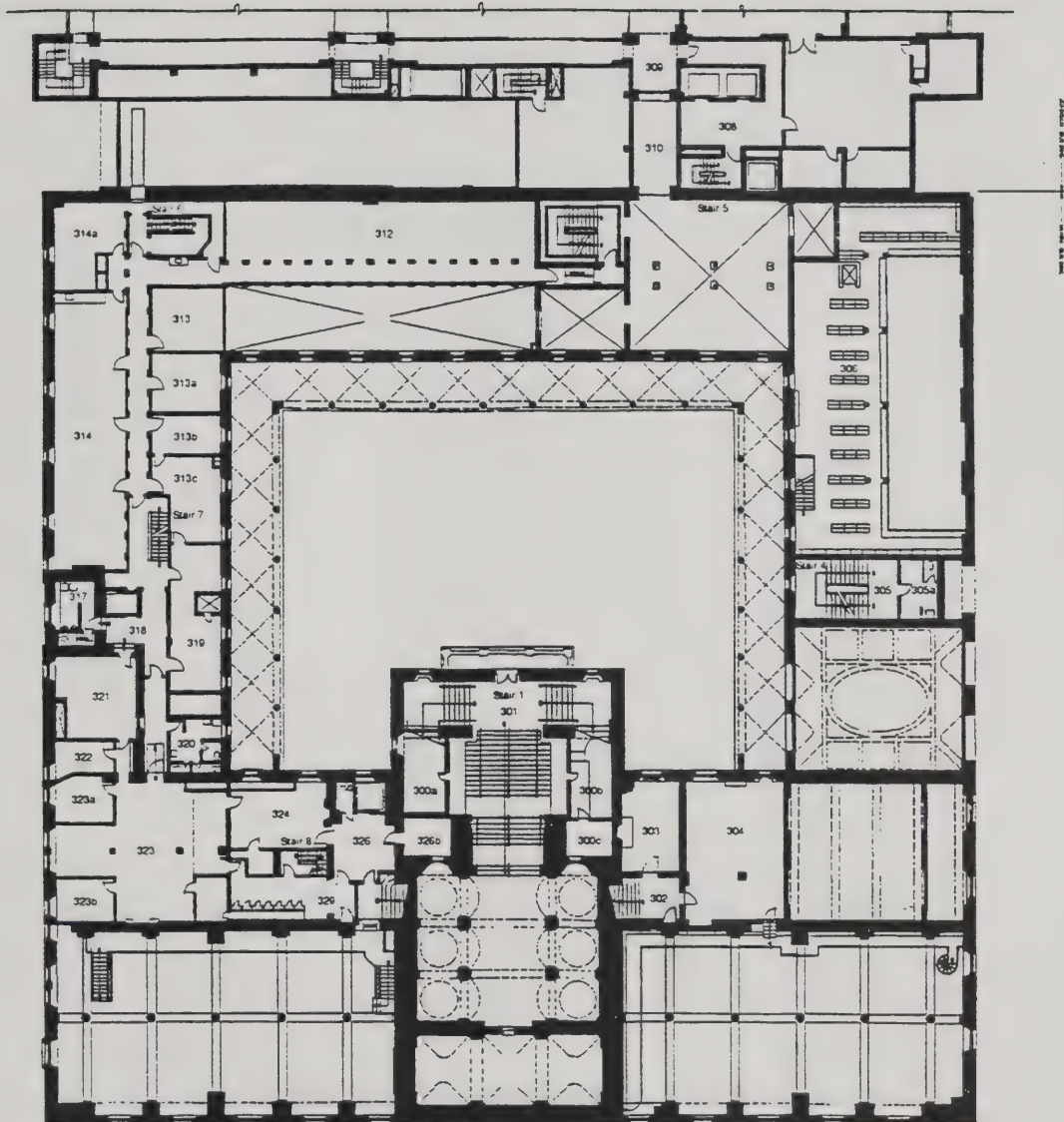
Ground Floor

N →



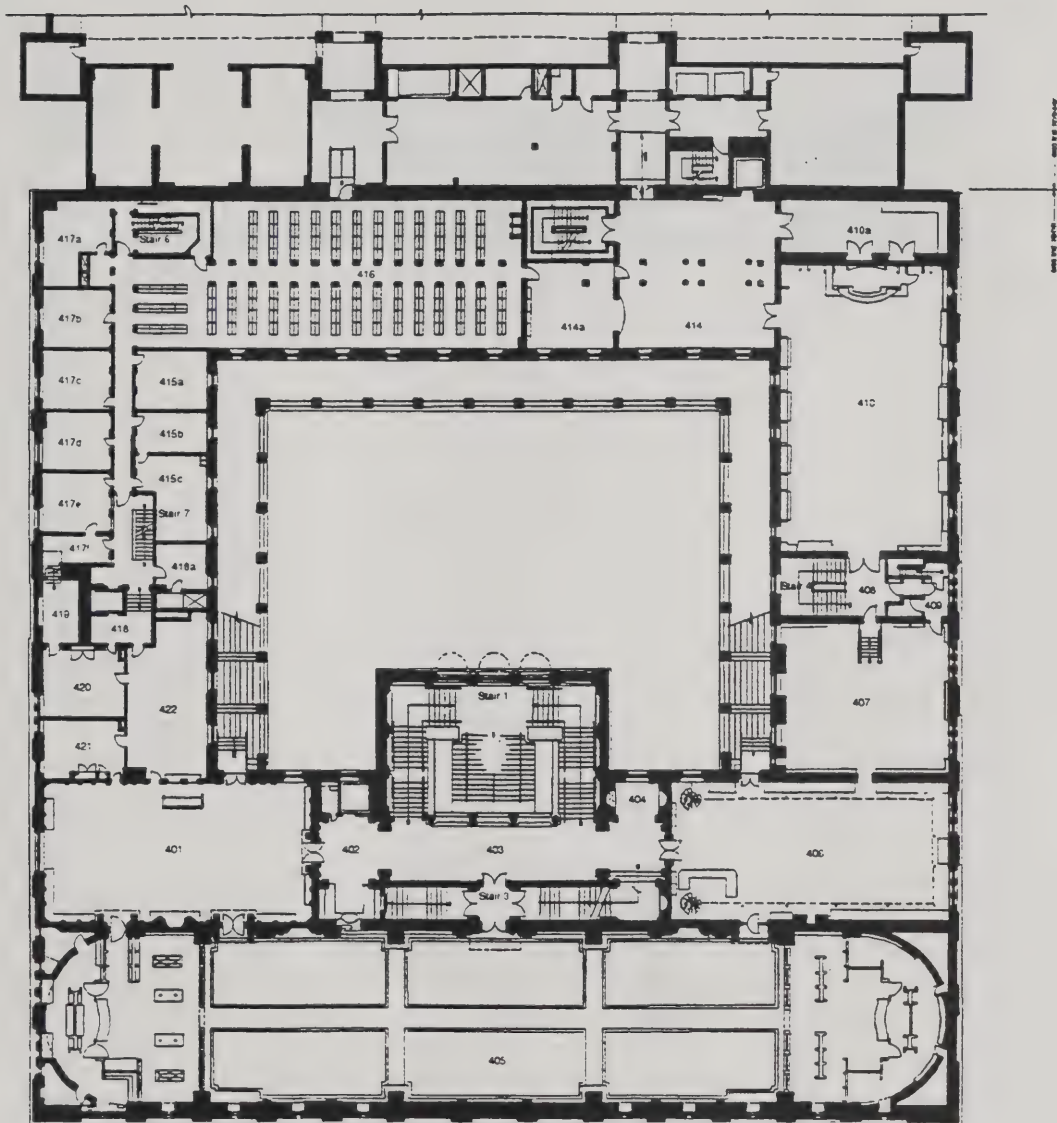
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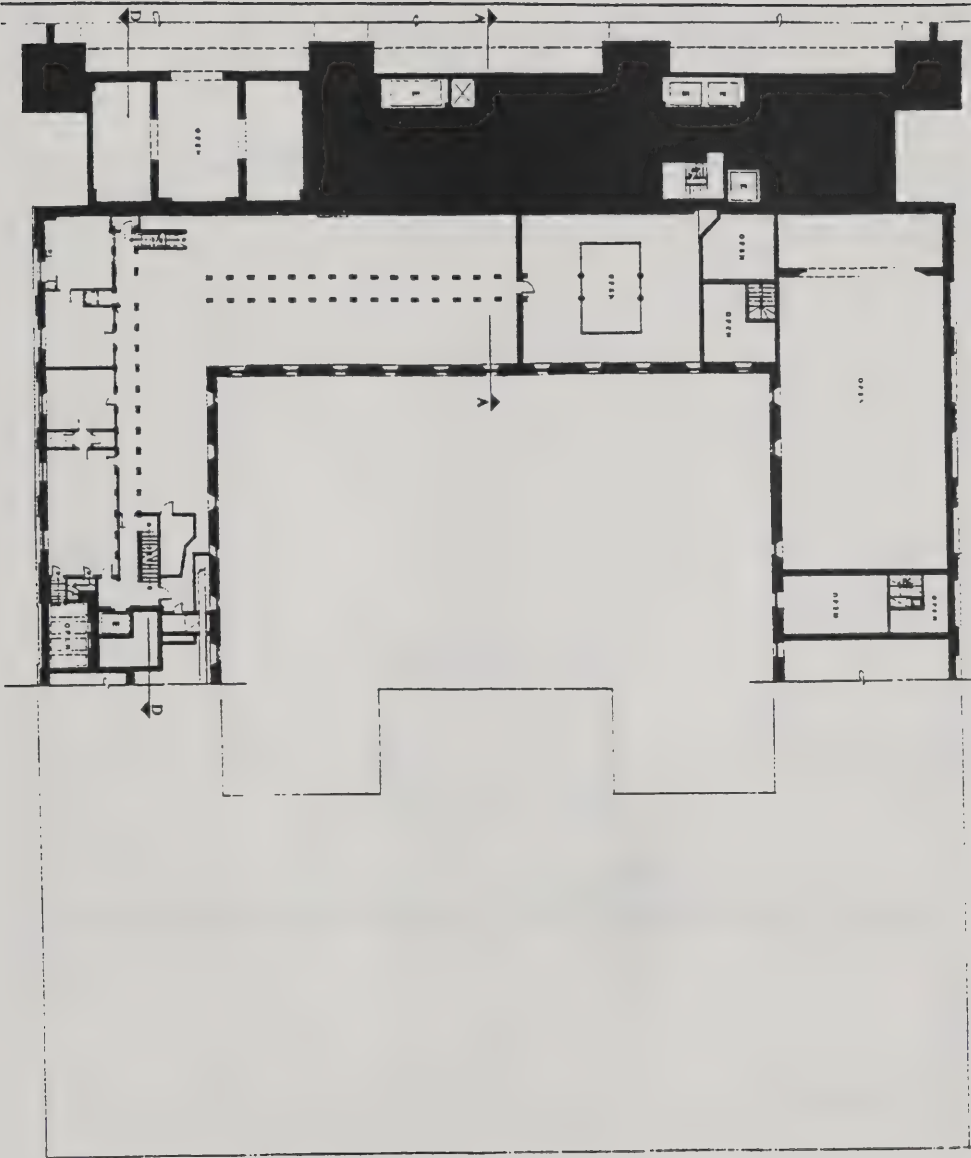
Bates Hall Floor

N →



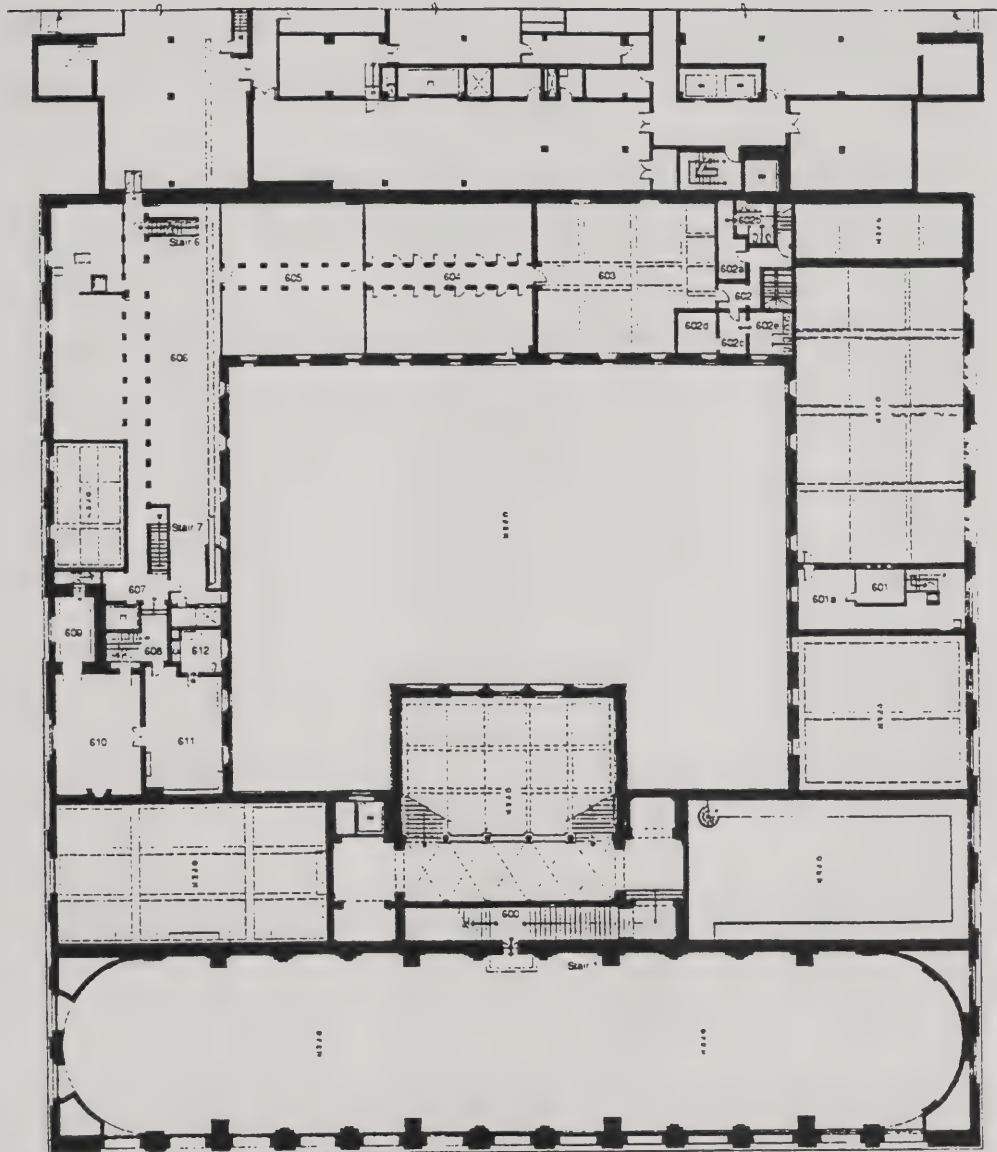
Stack 5

N →



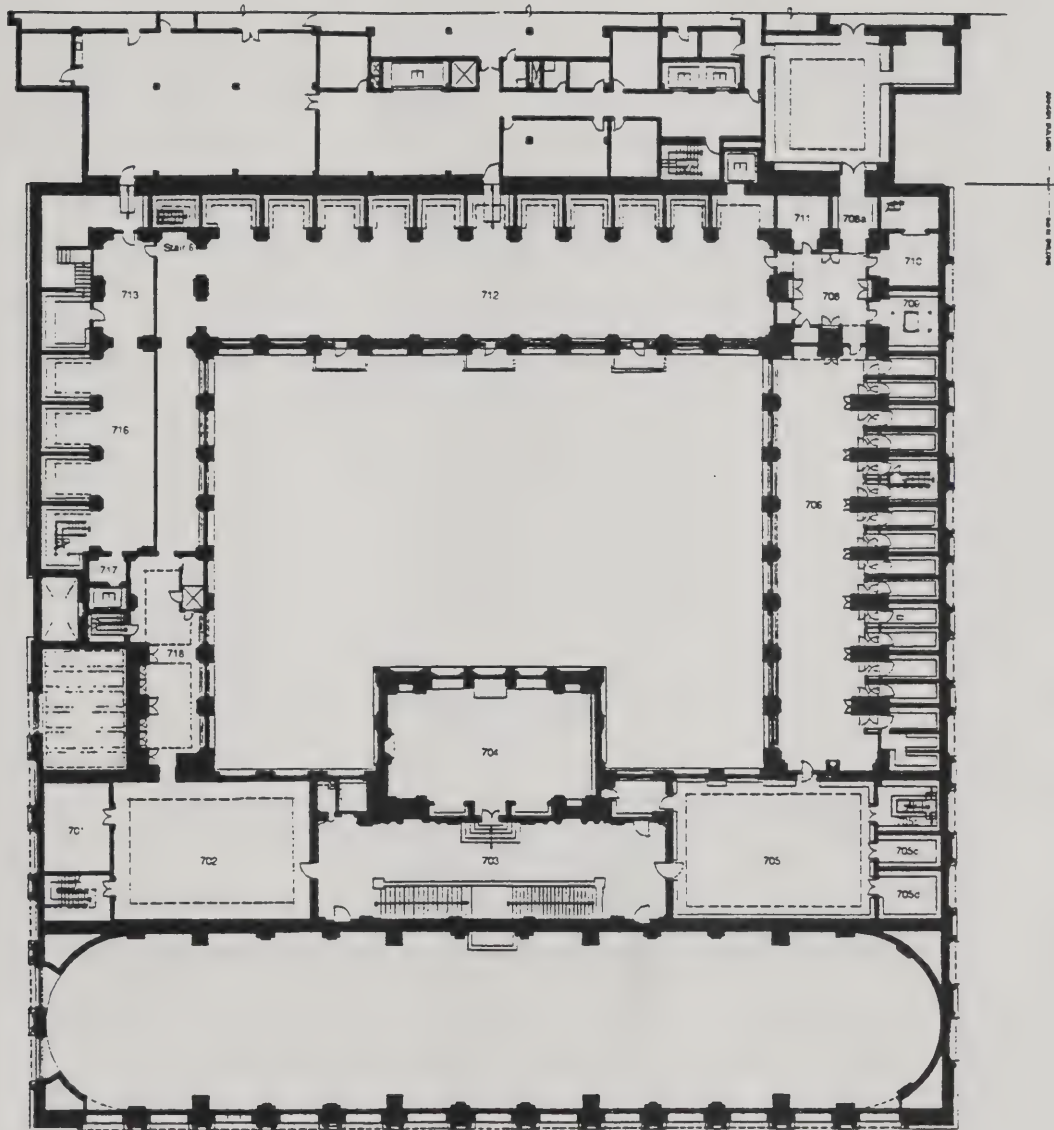
Entresol B

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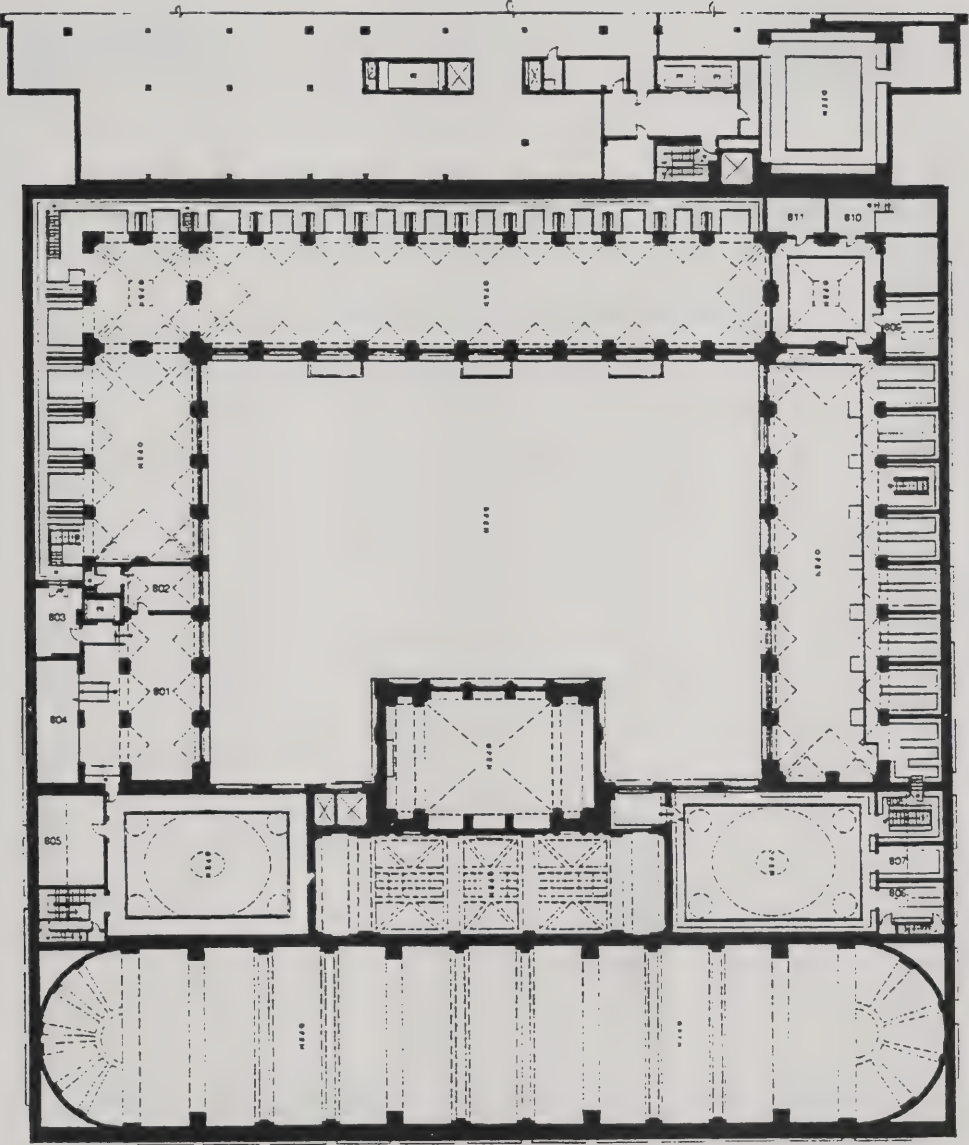
Special Library Floor

N →



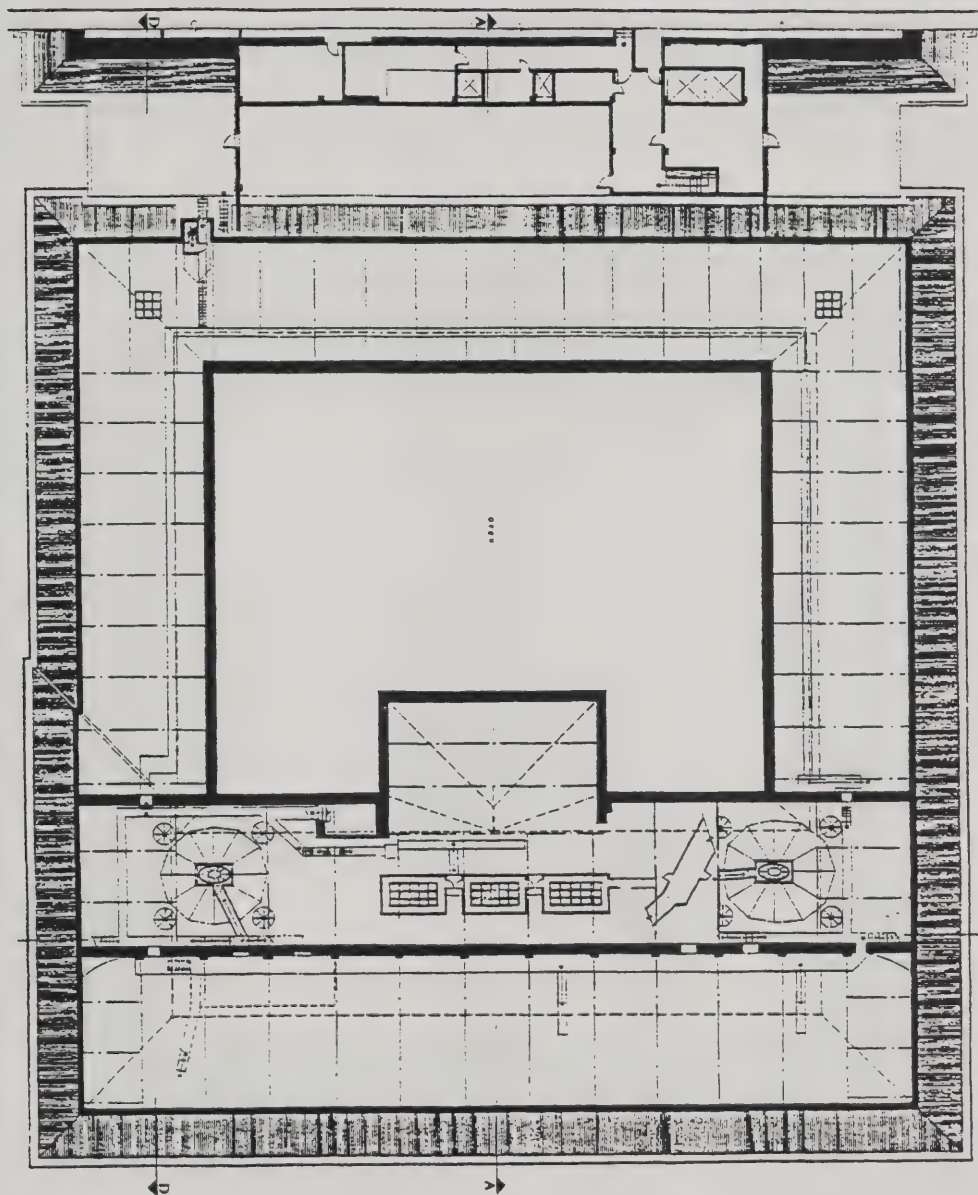
Special Library Mezzanine

N →



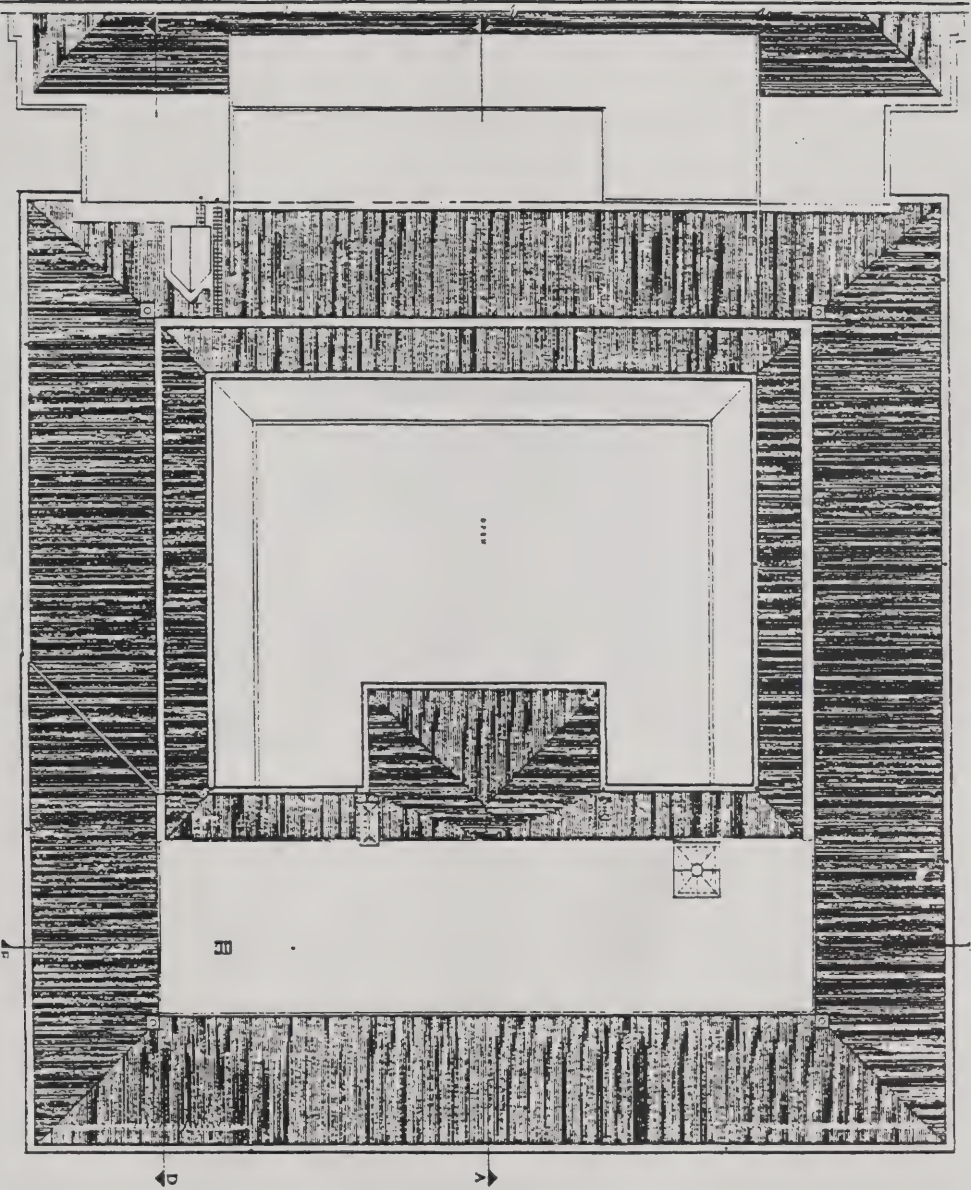
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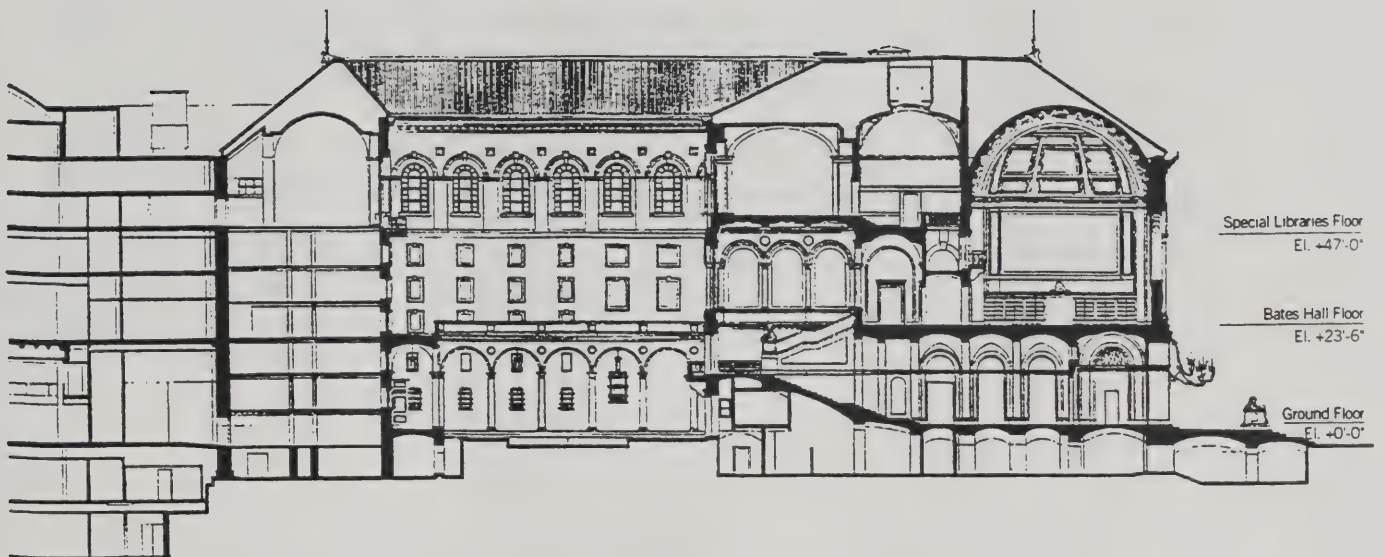
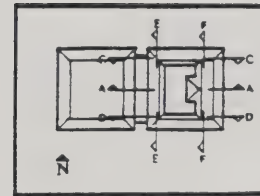


Roof

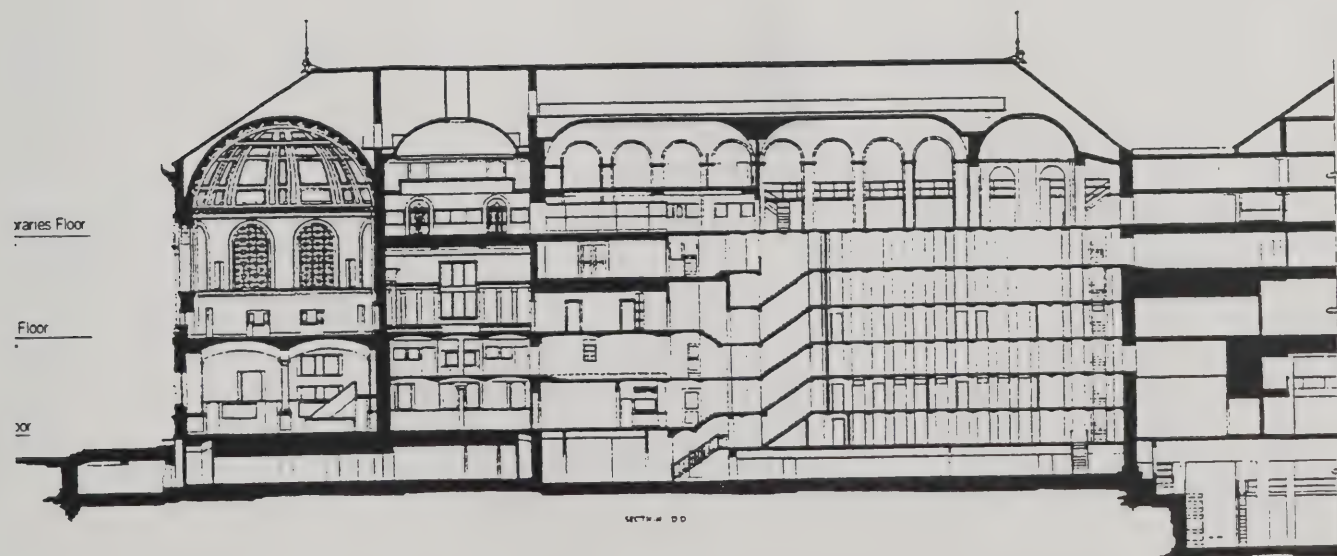
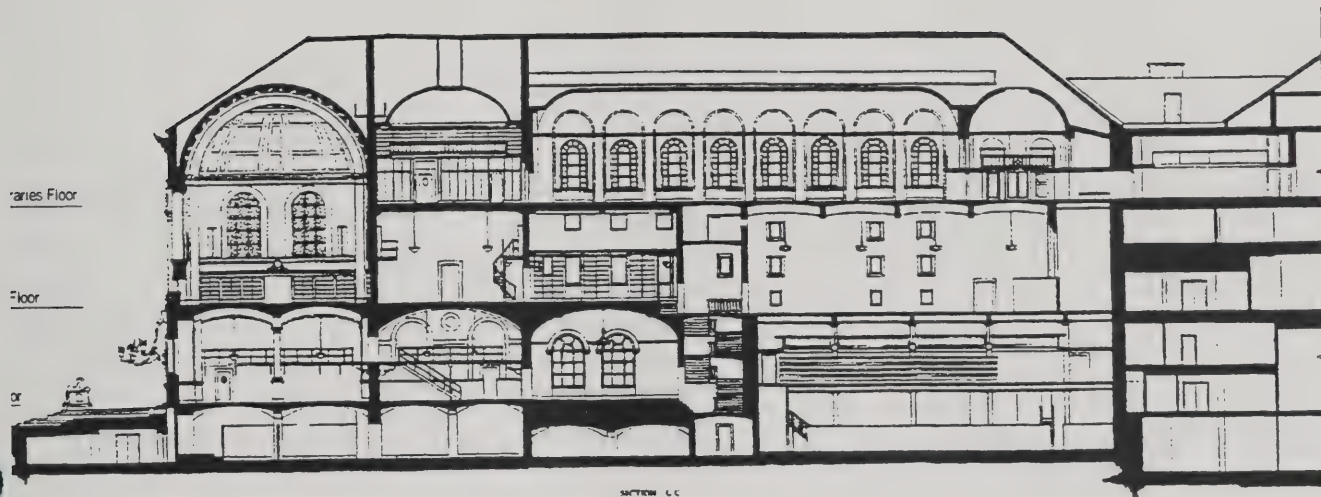
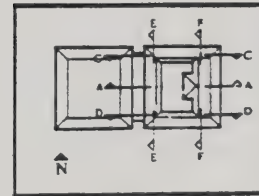
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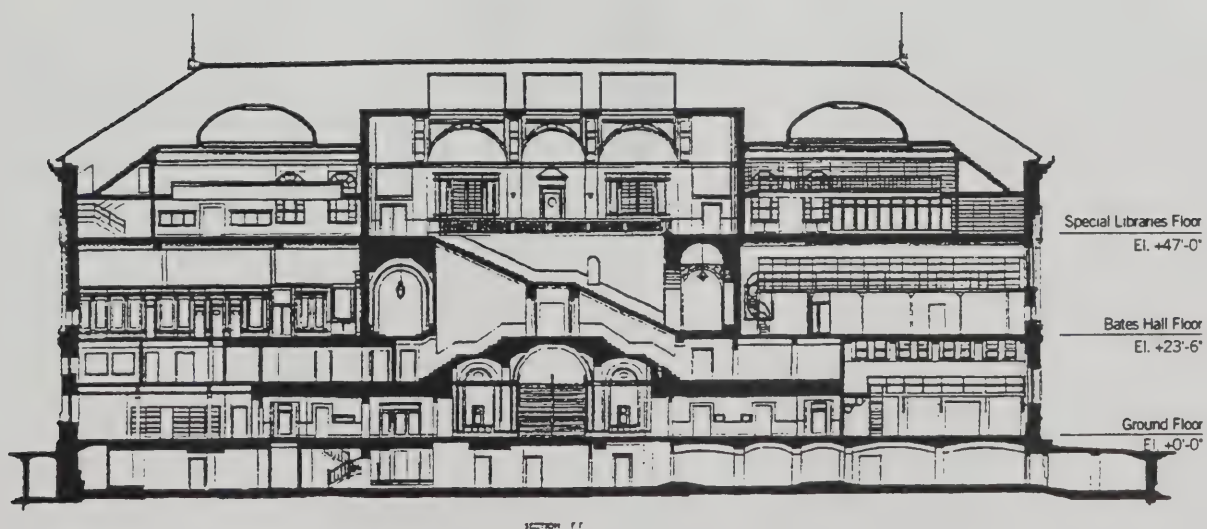
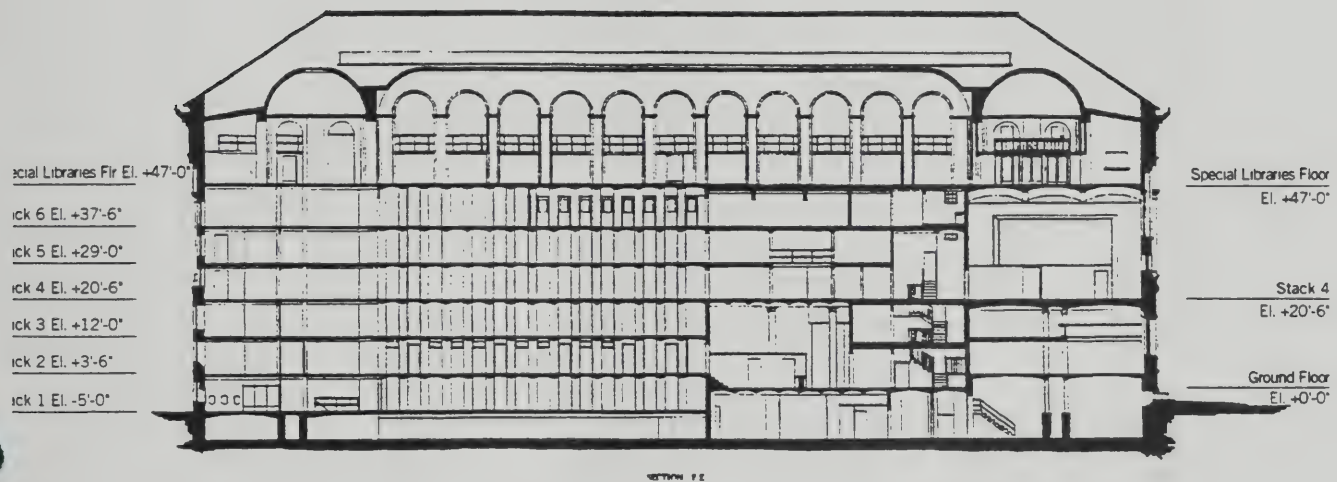
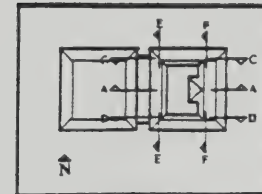
Section AA



Sections CC and DD



Sections EE and FF



2.0 Summary of Research

2.1 Repositories

2.2 Overview

2.0 Summary of Research

2.1 REPOSITORIES

The research for this Historic Structure Report has included the archival materials held by the following repositories:

The Boston Public Library (BPL), Boston, MA*

BPL Drawings Archive:	Architectural Drawings
BPL Print Collection:	Historic Photographs
BPL Trustees' Records:	Trustees' Minutes Trustees' Annual Reports Scrapbooks
BPL Papers:	Trustees' Correspondence McKim Correspondence
Secondary Sources:	Library Handbooks Sources Cited in the Bibliography

* The majority of these documents were found in the Rare Books and Manuscripts Department and in the Trustees' Records, courtesy of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library.

New York Historical Society (NYHS), New York, NY

McKim, Mead & White Archive: Architectural Drawings

McKim, Mead & White Manuscript Collection: Correspondence and Specifications

Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University, New York, NY

McKim, Mead & White Collection: Architectural Drawings

Guastavino Collection Photographs and Drawings

Library of Congress, Washington, DC

The Papers of Charles Follen McKim: Correspondence

Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA), Boston, MA

Historic Photographs

Robert Allen Cook Collection: Architectural Drawings

Olmsted Archives

Olmsted Correspondence and Drawings

2.2 OVERVIEW

The archival documentation for the McKim building is voluminous and contains some duplication, particularly in the drawings and historic photographs. It was the task of this Historic Structure Report to organize and synthesize the architectural documentation. All of the drawings located for the McKim building have been logged into a chart that identifies the content of the drawing, its source and date, and the collection in which it is held. This listing is included as Appendix 11.2 of this report. A listing of all the historic photographs of the McKim building has not been compiled for this report. The Boston Public Library's Print Department is the main repository for the building's historic photos. Their collection includes three volumes of construction photographs, as well as an extensive collection of photographs of the interior and exterior of the building. The Research Library Department of the Boston Public Library also has a collection of more recent photographs of the building. Because many of the historic photographs lack an identifying label or number, assembling an organizational list was not possible. Representative photographs from the collection have been reproduced for this report, and are presented in Appendix 11.1.

The primary source material used for the report is identified in the bibliography. Various manuscript collections were used for primary source material. These collections are cited in the bibliography, while specific items within these collections are cited individually in the endnotes.

3.0 Architectural Chronology

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Chronology

3.0 Architectural Chronology

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The architectural history of the McKim building is complex. The following chronological history of the Boston Public Library provides an overview of the key dates for the construction of, and alterations to, the McKim building. Entries in the Trustees' Annual Reports provide the majority of information contained in this chronology. Within the Trustees' Annual Reports, there are often reports from both the Director of the Library and the Examining Committee. The Director's Report generally lists the accomplishments of the Library over the previous year. The Examining Committee, formed to critically assess the functions of the Library, often comments on efficiency of the design of the new building and recommends changes when necessary. These two accounts provide a great deal of insight into the construction issues of the building history. Unless otherwise noted, the information in this section is taken from the Annual Reports.

Between 1940 and 1965, the Trustees' Annual Reports do not contain information related to work done in the building. The information for these years has been gathered from drawings and specifications found in the BPL Drawings Files, City of Boston Building Department permits, and other sources noted in the bibliography.

Room numbers noted in parentheses refer to the SBRA room designations as listed on the plans in Section 1.

3.2 CHRONOLOGY

1852

- Boston Public Library founded.

1852-58

- Library housed in the Mason Street schoolhouse.

1858

- Library moved to new Boylston Street building, designed by Charles Kirk Kirby.

1880

- April 22, Chapter 222, Acts 1880—Massachusetts Legislature granted the City of Boston a library, on the condition that construction begin within three years.²

1882

- May—Trustees, along with the architects, Ware and Van Brunt, studied the possibility of converting the English-High and Latin School for use as the Boston Public Library.
- August—Trustees rejected the recommendation that the English-High and Latin School be converted for use as the Library.

1883

- April—City Council agreed that the school was unsuitable for use as the library.

1884

- January—A specification was distributed for a competition for the design of the new library: (first prize—\$4,000; second prize—\$3,000; third prize—\$2,000; and fourth prize—\$1,000). Twenty architectural firms competed.
- April 14—Mayor Palmer approved orders authorizing \$180,000 for the purchase of additional lots on St. James Street (now Blagden Street) and \$450,000 for the construction of the Library building.

1885

- January—Prizes were awarded for the competition, but designs were determined to be unsuitable for the building. \$10,000 had been spent and the Trustees were no closer to building the Library than they had been in January of 1884.
- March—Arthur H. Vinal (City Architect) was directed to prepare plans for a building that would cost \$450,000 for the Trustees' approval.

1886

- July 20—Trustees' contracted with A. H. Vinal for the foundations of the building. The foundations were built without a set of approved drawings for the building.
- December—\$73,600.20 had been spent on the foundations.

1887

- March 10—Chapter 60, Acts 1887—Trustees were given full power and control of the design, construction, erection and maintenance of the Library. Trustees relieved Vinal of his responsibilities for designing a new library.
- March 30—Trustees signed a contract with the architectural firm of McKim, Mead & White for the design of the Library.

1888

- March 30—Trustees approved the McKim, Mead & White plans for the Library and authorized construction to begin.
- April 23—City Council approved a sum of \$1,165,955 for the building of the Library.
- May/June—Samuel A. B. Abbott became president of the Trustees.
- July 23—Woodbury and Leighton awarded the contract for the construction of the Library.
- November 28—Library cornerstone laid.

1889

- Foundations finished.
- New system of fireproof flooring adopted for ground floor—Guastavino tiles. All of the ground floor, including the area outside the building and the arcade, was constructed on this new system of fire-proof flooring. The Lecture Hall floor (410), a portion of the stack floors and the ceiling of the ground floor of the main building were also based on this new system. The iron beams, which were obtained for the floors of the ground floor, were being used for framing the first floor.
- Full size model of Bates Hall ceiling constructed in the stacks.
- Model of main cornice constructed at the corner of the building at Dartmouth and Blagden Streets.
- Exterior walls built to height of 11-feet above Bates Hall floor, except the rear section of Blagden Street, which is 7-feet above Bates Hall floor.
- Vestibule on Dartmouth Street finished (209), except for the carving.
- Marble piers in Entrance Hall set (210).
- Blagden Street vestibule completed except for setting steps.

1891

- Louis St. Gaudens lions received and placed in the Staircase Hall (207).
- Contains lengthy discussion about the interior design of the Library.
- Contains discussions regarding the cost of the building. City Document No. 54 contains the questioning by the Committee on Library Department of McKim and S.A.B. Abbott about the cost of the building, (See Appendix 11.7).

1892

- Blagden Street platform and steps completed.
- Sidewalk and railing on Boylston and Dartmouth Streets finished.
- Buffers, curbs, driveway pavement, pedestals for statuary and seals for Dartmouth Street entrance completed.
- Carving of frieze inscriptions and tablet on all three elevations of the building completed.
- Courtyard arcade and fountain basin set.
- Cellar concreting completed.
- Installation of mechanical systems was in progress.
- Heating apparatus was on, columns fire-proofed, and supports set for the book railway and pneumatic service.
- Coal and ashes railway installed.
- Iron shutters for outside windows underway.
- Iron staircases throughout the building completed.
- Beams, terra-cotta floor and all work connected with the elevators set.
- Periodical Room (214): brick wainscot and columns done, radiators set, register frames and air-ducts in place, fireproofing on walls completed and floor ready for terra-cotta.
- Map Room (Current Periodical Room, 215): brick and stone finish of the walls are complete and the walls plastered. The ceiling is painted and the marble door jambs and radiators set.
- North and South Corridors (211, 203): ceiling is plastered, walls ready for skimming and marble door jambs, wainscot, and electrical conduits are in position.
- Stonework for Bates Hall (405) finished and the ironwork for the ceiling were put in position, except for the north end.

1893

- The report stated, "There has been no interruption of work upon the new Public Library building during the year. It has proceeded satisfactorily, and is not in such advanced condition that the building will be ready for occupancy during the year 1894..."³

1894

- Nothing reported.

1895

- City Document No. 135 summarizes the total cost of the building to the present.
- The Library opened to the public.

1896

- 50 horsepower auxiliary engine added to Library. New engine carried the entire load from 6 am to 4 pm. New engine allowed the ventilating fans to be run throughout the library day rather than until 6 pm.
- 2,150-feet of radiating surface added on Special Library floor and 366-feet in Newspaper Room (214) and Bindery (216). "With these additions, there has been no difficulty in keeping a comfortable temperature in these rooms, part of which during last winter were at times uninhabitable."⁴
- Newspaper Room equipped with shelving for bound newspapers (214).
- Eight M. P. Puvis de Chavannes panels installed in Grand Staircase Hall.
- Ceiling of Chavannes Lobby painted by Mr. Garnsey. Staircase decoration completed (403).

1897

- New hoisting machine for the passenger elevator installed. Original hoisting machine found to be "imperfect in operation."⁵
- Roof of the arcade re-laid with a coating of slate to remedy leaks.
- Changes under contemplation, that were "properly chargeable to construction" included:
 - Additions to the heating and ventilation systems.
 - A service elevator.
 - System of intercommunication between the stacks.
 - Enlargement of the space for the issue of books.
 - Adaptation of other (stack) space for administrative uses.
 - Construction of a gallery or mezzanine in the Newspaper Room to accommodate the patent collection.
 - Freeing the present Patent Room for a Children's Room (407).
 - Work on the terrazzo floor.
- Delivery Room and Children's Room had chandeliers added (401, 406).
- Domed rooms on the upper floor (Special Libraries) have had lights circling the domes added (702, 705).
- Sketches for the bronze doors to be provided by Daniel C. French approved by the Trustees.
- "Bacchante—The group of dancing nymph and child, offered by Mr. Charles F. McKim for the fountain in the courtyard, was at his request returned to him in June last. It is now placed in the Metropolitan Museum at New York."⁶

1898

- Third engine added to the heating system.
- 18-foot intake fan in the basement replaced with a 10-foot intake fan.
- Substitution of steam for hot water coils, to raise the temperature of the air drawn in from the courtyard to be forced up through the ducts.
- Installation of special ventilating fans in the Engine Room.
- Raising of the ventilating duct in the Engine Room so that it is above the high tide mark.
- Boylston Street driveway enclosed to create an inner periodical room (216). Existing Periodical Room enlarged by removing partition (215). Newspaper and Periodical Rooms in three large rooms en suite (214–216).
- Registration desk moved from Children's Room (406) to Delivery Room (401).
- Children's Room enlarged by the addition of the adjacent room (formerly the Patent Room) (406, 407).
- Collection of drawings and specifications for patents was moved to a room in the west wing that can be reached from the courtyard and from the Special Library floor. It corresponds to stacks 4, 5 and 6. The Statistical Department was also housed in this location (414).
- Librarians' Office moved from the space adjacent to the Abbey Room into the Stacks resulting in the space for the issuing of books being doubled (420, 421).
- Pneumatic tube system overhauled.
- New suite of administrative offices created in Stack 5 for Librarian and Executive Department consisting of the ante-room, main office, private office and a room for records and files. The suite of rooms is connected with the Trustees' Room through a lobby that was formerly open to Blagden Street. (New administrative offices are in Stack 5 on the Blagden Street side.)
- Parts of stacks 1 and 2 were equipped for administrative uses (B25–B29).
- Stack 2 was equipped for Branch Library distribution (225–228).
- Adaptation of portions of stacks 2 and 5 for administrative uses included enlarging a series of windows on Blagden Street from 2-feet 3-inches to 4-feet 10-inches in width.
- Staircase built in the southwesterly corner of the building to connect all levels of the stacks (228).
- Stock and Duplicate Rooms created in the basement.
- Passenger and freight elevators installed in the Blagden Street wing (236).
- Offices for Editor of Library publications, Chief of Issue, Chief of the Ordering Departments and Luncheon and Locker Rooms for staff were created in the south side entresol (322–324).
- Catalogue and Periodical Rooms, stacks and corridors painted (202, 203, 211, 214).

1899

- At the beginning of the year, the Trustees found “‘improvements upon the new Library building and the fittings thereof,’ for which the City of Boston had provided the sum of \$100,000 ... They have given to the Library increased facilities for administration, enlarged accommodations for readers, and much needed additional machinery, administrative equipment and furniture...”⁷

1900

- Extensive repairs on the Library building were necessary.
- Tile roof newly cemented.
- Joints in the walls repointed.
- Courtyard walls in the basement made watertight.
- Ironwork outside the building put in order.
- Public lavatories moved from the front to the rear of the building (208, 212–223).
- Engines and electrical machinery required considerable expenditure for repair.

1901

- Heating in Bates Hall repaired (405). New thermostat installed.
- Steam pipes inside gutters replaced.
- Boilers reset in brick from foundation up.
- Ventilation in the Catalogue Room improved (202).
- Elliott Room ceiling decoration completed (407).
- Installation of the Abbey paintings completed in the Delivery Room. Delivery Room ceiling treated with ornaments in lead, in low relief, having been applied to the beams and painted with a slight use of gold. Work done by Mr. H. M. Lawrence of the Lewis F. Perry & Whitney Company of Boston (See Figure D-19) (401).
- Walls of the upper level prepared for the second installation of Sargent mural paintings (703).

1902

- Bindery and Print Departments moved from the Central Library to Stanhope Street. Rooms previously occupied by these departments fitted with gallery and shelving for the Patent and Bound Newspaper Departments (218, 218a).
- Portion of the second section of Sargent’s mural decoration entitled “Dogma of the Redemption” was installed. Only the frieze and lunette of this wall were finished; the ceiling and two panels of the frieze were not finished yet (703).

1903

- Refitting of the room and galleries occupied by the Statistical Department required the installation of 60 additional electric lamps, 40 others were placed elsewhere in the building (414).
- Consumption of soft coal, necessary while the coal strike continued, caused heavy soiling to the interior and exterior of the building.
- Bas-relief of Robert Charles Billings by Augustus St. Gaudens was purchased for the north corridor of the courtyard.

1904

- Minor repairs to the dynamos—one of the boilers re-tubed.
- New perforated brass pipe placed in outside roof gutters for thawing ice and snow.
- Some additional radiating surface placed in colder part of the building.
- Tile roof thoroughly inspected—All tiles were replaced or repaired, and all defective joints were re-cemented.

1905

- Walls, piers and ceilings of the Special Libraries, including Barton-Ticknor and the Music Room, were entirely renovated under the direction of the Library's painter (702, 705–718).
- Vacuum cleaning system installed in the stacks.

1906

- 50 additional electric lamps installed, and various improvements were made. In the Catalogue Department, increased light was provided by means of lamps encircling the five columns in the center of the room (202).
- Periodical Room (No. 1) repainted and book elevator installed (215).
- Tile roof extensively repaired, (246 tiles replaced).
- Repairs were made to correct leaks in the courtyard arcade.

1907

- Report of the Examining Committee, Recommendations: ⁸
 - In order to increase room for books and decrease danger from fire, metal book-frames with glass shelves should be substituted for the present wood ones.
 - Automatic fireproof doors should be placed to separate the stacks wherever practicable. On page 13, Librarian denied that any of this was necessary.
 - Bates Hall: some seats placed nearer the delivery desk would be serviceable, a few more lights also (405).
- No important changes were made in the equipment.
- Fire boxes of the three boilers were relined, and the bridge walls rebuilt.
- Additional lamps were installed in Newspaper Room to improve the lighting (214).

- Changes were under consideration affecting the lighting of the wall cases in Bates Hall (405).
- Vacuum cleaning system was extended and applied to cleaning of books and shelves in the stacks and other parts of the building, including sweeping on the Special Library Floor.
- Exterior woodwork of windows and doors ought to be painted at an early day.

1908

- Contract with Augustus St. Gaudens and the City, made on November 30, 1892 for groups of statuary to be placed on pedestals at the Copley Square entrance, terminated with his death in the summer of 1907.

1909

- Bookcases and shelves added to the Special Libraries (706–718).
- Rooms occupied by Ordering (201), Catalogue (202) and Branch Departments, Newspaper Room (214), Sargent Hall (703), and Stacks completely renovated (706–718).
- Terrazzo floor in corridor from Entrance Hall to Newspaper and Periodical Rooms replaced with marble tiling (211).
- Basement cleaned and whitened.

1910

- Seventy-four (74) two-light brackets over bookcases installed in Bates Hall (405); in the Newspaper Room, the columns through the center of the room were encircled with bands carrying eight lights each (214).

1911

- Basement walls and ceilings cleaned and whitened.
- Walls in the Lecture Hall washed and retinted (410).
- Walls of Children's Room retinted (406).

1912

- Minor repairs to the roof and gutters.
- Side and bridge wall of the boilers rebuilt, new mouthpieces added, new tubes put in one boiler.
- Bela Pratt sculptures erected on Dartmouth Street platform.
- Boylston Street Subway Station constructed.

1913

- Fireboxes of boilers relined, new bridge walls built.
- Gradually, as a need arose for new lamps, those having tungsten filaments were substituted for the ordinary carbon type and the lamps of the new style were now in use in all the corridors, in Bates Hall (405), in the Fine Arts (702) and Children's Departments (406).
- Extensive repairs to the plaster surface of the groined arches in the courtyard arcade.

1914

- Fire boxes were connected with the three re-lined boilers.
- Minor repairs made on the steam pipe system, on the pumps, and on the elevators.

1915

- Minor repairs made to the heating system—worn valves and valve stems replaced. Boilers relined.
- New counter drum ropes installed on the electric elevator.
- Book railway and pneumatic tube showing effects of wear—before long it would have to be replaced.
- Table lamps and lamps and catalogue cases in Brown Music Room (704) discontinued, and in place thereof semi-indirect fixtures installed experimentally or permanently.
- Repairs were made to tile roof after severe storms. Courtyard arcade roof continued to have problems.

1916

- Routine repairs made to electrical equipment, elevators and steam plant.
- Considerable work done to the roof and gutters.
- Special repairs completed around and upon the skylights over the Sargent Hall (703), preliminary to the installation of the important mural decorations placed beneath them.

1917

- Blagden Street addition nearly complete.
- Report notes that no repairs of consequence have been made to the Central Library Building since 1895. It recommends that a careful examination by the proper authorities be authorized at an early date and as soon as practicable thereafter repairs and structural changes should be undertaken.

1918

- Blagden Street addition completed.
- Addition reduced space pressures in several departments in the McKim building—Public Documents were removed from Special Libraries to the stacks.
- Branch and Shipping Departments moved to addition.
- Addition also contained stack space, designed to reduce main building crowding.
- Printing and Binding Departments also housed in the addition.

1919

- The following work was undertaken at the recommendation (made in 1918) of Mr. Thomas A. Fox of Fox & Gale Architects:
 - Extensive and thorough repairs on the roofs and flashings of the arcade.
 - Repair and repointing of outside granite platforms.
 - Marble floors gradually being brought into a state of repair.
 - Usual repairs to the roof and gutters on the Central Building
 - Unexpected repairs on the roof of the Annex.

1920

- Extensive repairs were necessary on the main roof and gutters—work was executed by John Farquhar's Sons, Inc.
 - Gutters relined with new copper.
 - Flashings & tiles have been replaced wherever necessary.
- There was a pressing need of a new passenger elevator.
- Need overhaul of tube system and book railway which "in late years have given much dissatisfaction."⁹
- Lighting needed to be improved in Bates Hall (405), Special Libraries (706–718) and Catalogue Room (202).
- "Inside shades are much to be desired for the large windows in Bates Hall."¹⁰
- Walls and ceiling of the third floor were badly in need of cleaning and repainting.

1921

- Contract for new electric passenger elevator awarded to F. W. Payne Company for \$5,624 and work completed on November 30.
- "Serious consideration must be given immediately to the need of a thorough overhauling and extension of the pneumatic tube and electric book carrier systems in the Central Library. Both have been in use since the building was first occupied and now need almost constant tinkering and repairs in order that even unsatisfactory service may be secured. A new up-to-date installation will be necessary if quick book delivery from distant parts of the stacks is to be secured."¹¹
- Rearrangement of the Special Libraries on account of the Technical Division is of paramount importance.

- Lecture Hall (410) repairs and improvements were still impossible: ventilation was “criminally bad” and Hall was “distressingly dingy.”¹²

1922

- No annual report found.

1923

- Ventilation in the public Lecture Hall improved by the installation of a new ten horse-power air-washing machine, with electric fan and the necessary connections with air shafts (410).
- Lighting in the west gallery in the Special Library Department improved by the installation of fifteen 300-watt indirect ceiling fixtures (712).
- New equipment in men’s public lavatory and the lavatories of men and women employees.
- Two new tiers of steel stacks in the Annex.

1924

- Director’s Report did not describe work done but gave a report of all the work that needed to be undertaken as of the Library’s 30th anniversary.
 - Book carrier system out of commission for several months.
 - Frequent breakdowns in pneumatic tube system.
 - Unsatisfactory lighting in many parts of the building.
 - Heating system only 30% efficient, ventilating system inadequate and useless.
 - Most departments required thorough cleaning and repainting.
 - He reports that, “The mural decorations demand immediate attention, in order to prevent serious deterioration.”¹³
- Report of Examining Committee
 - “Although the City administration has given a large measure of support to the Library, it has not been possible to use any considerable portion of the annual appropriations for changes or even the necessary maintenance of the building itself.”¹⁴
 - Leaks in roof.
 - Numerous serious defects in certain mechanical and constructional features.
 - Main ventilating system abandoned, main fan cannot run, prime radiators have been taken away, air filters disappeared.
 - Check valves should be installed in pipes to keep sewage from leaking into basement and entering pneumatic tube system.
 - Metal chimney stack needs attention.
 - Pump and fountain tanks should be cleaned and repaired.
 - Some main steam line pipes should be replaced.
 - Back pressure valve furnished on heating lines.

- New return tank needed.
- Changes recommended: building of 2 new floors onto annex so that the Catalogue and Ordering Department (201, 202) can be moved to more suitable location and Children's Department (406) can be transferred to the ground floor and given a separate entrance on Blagden Street; Moving of Music Department into North Gallery (706), making old Music Room (704) into Treasure Room.
- "...the time has now come when money must be spent in larger amounts upon this part of the City's property, or paralysis of its function will result."¹⁵ —The Examining Committee recommended that at least \$50,000 be set aside in 1925 for extraordinary repairs.

1925

- Increased appropriations allowed for major repairs:
 - New uniflow engine and generator installed. Old engine and generator repaired.
 - New boilers in the Annex re-tubed.
 - Old boilers removed from beneath main stairway.
 - Book railway repaired and rebuilt.
 - New electrical "service elevator" replaced old one at Blagden Street entrance.
 - New ventilating system installed in the Lecture Hall (410).
 - Major leaks in the roof repaired. The metal secondary roof and catch-pans over the hall (presumably Bates Hall) were repaired and renewed where necessary.
 - Centrifugal pump installed (location not given).
 - Record Room enlarged.
 - New lights installed in Fine Arts Gallery (401), Periodical (215) and Statistical Rooms (414).
 - Sprinkler system installed in two sections of the Central Library.
 - Window trim and ironwork painted in Fine Arts Gallery (401), Stacks 1-6, and Printing Department.
 - Upper gallery of the Statistical Room floored over, giving much needed space for the Fine Arts Department cabinets (414).

1926

- Reports on fire safety of holdings compiled. Findings recommended the following:
 - Turn Music Room (704) into Treasure Room with fire-proof construction & equipment.
 - Reconstruct Barton Ticknor Room (705) and North Gallery (706) with fire-proof equipment.
 - Complete sprinkler system installation in basement.
- Ventilation system was reestablished and put in good repair.
- Book railway system completely overhauled.
- Boilers retubed with new drain valves.

- Major repairs to the roof begun: 20,000 tiles repointed with "plastic compound."
- Statistical Department (414), Lecture Hall (410), Map Room (216), Central Branch Department (230) and Exhibition Room (702) were all cleaned and decorated.
- Mezzanine floor built in Central Branch Department and major repairs undertaken there (230).
- New furnaces built in the boilers, new grates furnished, feed pump overhauled.
- New cables put on both passenger elevators.
- New lighting systems installed in Bates Hall (405), Map Room (216), Stack 6, and Statistical Department (414).
- Fire walls built in basement where combustibles were stored.
- Lecture Hall (410): (thorough renovation)
 - New draperies provided for stage.
 - Other draperies cleaned.
 - Emergency exit lights put in.

1927

- Two-thirds of the roof tiles (50,000) repointed.
- Repairs made on gutters, cresting, skylights, and sections of the inner condensation roof.
- Exterior facades and walls of inner court repointed.
- Catalogue enclosure in Bates Hall (410) equipped with new tables, shelves and cases.
- Rubber tile flooring placed in Children's Room (406).
- New electrical switchboard put in basement.
- Start made to rewiring entire building.
- Installation of added air ducts in Fine Arts Department (702)—improved ventilation.
- New brick sidewalk laid on Dartmouth Street.
- Newspaper (214), Teacher's (407), & Fine Arts Reading Rooms (718) repainted.
- Report of Examining Committee:
 - Recommended that rearrangements of Special Library Floor should be effected. (Treasure Room, etc.)
 - Sprinkler system extended.
 - Floors in General Reading and Exhibition Rooms (702) in unsatisfactory condition—either repaired or cracked—recommended putting in rubber tile floors similar to that in Children's Room (406) into other areas.
 - Substituted steel stacks for wooden ones until all changed.

1928

- Repointing and replacement of roof tiling completed.
- Two large skylights replaced.
- Roof ridge cresting furnished with new supports of brass.
- Sprinkler system installed in entire basement, all elevator and air shafts.

- Printing and Bindery Departments equipped with thermostat system for fire protection.
- Necessary section of wall provided with "water curtain."
- Rewiring of the building completed.
- New lighting fixtures installed in Fire Arts (716, 718), West Gallery (712), Issue and Registration Departments (401, 420–422), Newspaper (214) and Patent Rooms (218, 218a).
- New lighting fixtures installed in basement book stacks.
- Lecture Hall (410):
 - General and stage lighting improved.
 - New seats installed.
 - New moving picture booth and equipment installed.
 - New screen and stage curtain installed.
 - Acoustical draperies hung.
- Sections of Entrance Hall (210) and Delivery Room (401)—new marble blocks laid.
- All book stacks repainted.
- Furnaces rebuilt under the boilers. New arch protectors installed, coal conveyor added to the Boiler Room equipment.

1929

- Trustees' Report mentions reconstruction (rearrangement of rooms discussed in 1926 report recommendations) of the third floor of the Library.
- Substitution of steel and concrete for portions of the old piles of the foundation.
- New pneumatic tube system installed.
- Fountain basin reconstructed in the courtyard.
- Re-laid marble floor in Entrance Hall (210).
- Cleaned Puvis de Chavannes murals.
- Practically the whole Library repainted, except for Bates Hall.
- Tables in the Periodical Room resurfaced and refinished (215).
- New bookcases installed in the Teacher's Room (407), Statistical (414), Branch and Ordering Departments (230), and in the Information Office.

1930

- New steel lockers installed for employees.
- Statistical Department lighting improved.
- New ornamental lantern and reflector added to Sargent staircase.
- Fire partitions and fire doors placed at hazardous points.
- Galvanized iron placed on flooring beneath ventilating fan under roof.
- Ventilation in Newspaper Room (214) improved.
- Steam driven vacuum machine placed in operation in connection with pneumatic tube system.

- Book railway that served the stacks equipped with a device recording the trips made by the cars during the day.
- Installation of automatic soot-blowers on boilers increased efficiency of power plant.
- Report of Examining Committee:
 - White-painted wooden cases in West Gallery (712) were antiquated. They were too crowded and took up too much space.
 - Improvements made in North Gallery (706) last year should be followed for West.
 - Flooring of Newspaper Room (214) and Exhibition Room (702) needed renovation.
 - It was recommended that the Catalogue and Order Departments (201, 202) be moved and their space converted to Children's and Teacher's Rooms.

1931

- Platform in front of the building reconstructed. It was re-laid such that space beneath it afforded the Library most valuable storage space.
- Bates Hall (405):
 - Walls and ceilings redecorated.
 - New terrazzo floor laid.
 - Furniture: tables, bookcases, chairs, book shelving refinished.
 - New desks installed.
 - Ornamental iron gates placed in two of the entrance doors.
- Lighting improved in the Annex book stacks and in the Statistical Department by the substitution of holophane units for drop cord lights.
- New electric fixtures installed in the Patent Room.

1932

- Report of Examining Committee:
 - Lighting needed to be improved in Abbey Room (401) and Sargent Gallery (703).
 - Newspaper Room (214) needed better ventilation and the floor needed repair.
 - The Statistical Department (414) needed to be moved to a more convenient and suitable location.
 - The Children's Room (406) needed to be moved to the first floor and given a separate entrance.
- The Director's only comment regarding the building reflected the hard times of the Depression. He stated that, "Improvement of the physical facilities had to be put aside for better days."¹⁶

1933

- Report of Examining Committee:
 - Light in Delivery Room (401), especially for viewing Abbey murals is poor—Proposed getting a lighting engineer.
 - Sargent and Puvis de Chavannes paintings needed attention and recommended that they be examined by experts for cleaning or treatment.
 - Exhibition Room of Fine Arts Department was “characterless and uninteresting.” Recommended that it be studied, and uses realigned (702).
 - West wall of building was bulging. Investigation should continue.
 - Newspaper Room floor should be replaced and ventilation improved (214).
 - Walls of Periodical Room needed washing or repainting (215).
 - Chips out of floor of Bates Hall should be filled (405).
 - Cracked tiles on roof should be replaced.
 - Planting of courtyard was excellent—plan designed by landscape architects with final scheme in view.
- The Director reported that the Library had been assigned projects, financed by the Federal government, to provide relief for the unemployed. These Civil Works Projects included:
 - Changing all the cards in the card catalogue.
 - Cleaning books.
 - Painting.

1934

- The only work recorded at the Library were Civil Works Projects:
 - Painting of ceilings and walls.
 - Book cleaning.

1935

- No work reported on the Library building. The Annual Report of the Trustees, however, discussed overcrowding in the building and suggested that consideration be given to the reallocation of departmental space.

1937

- In response to the continual repairs necessary on the roof, a study was done by J. R. Worcester & Co. to recommend a fundamental and permanent treatment of the problem. They reported it would cost \$256,000, (September 13, 1937).
- Report of Examining Committee discussed grave overcrowding for both staff and patrons. It was suggested that the Newspaper Room (214) and Central Department for Branch Libraries be moved out of the building to another central location.

1938

- Limited funds permitted no work during 1938 except for minor repairs throughout the library system that were immediately necessary.

Between 1940 and 1965 the Trustees Reports do not give a summary of the work done at the Library Building. This part of the chronology is composed from other sources including correspondence, specifications, drawings, secondary sources, and records of the Building Department of the City of Boston. Dates in this section may not be accurate because drawing dates do not necessarily reflect actual building dates.

1940

- Drawings for Fireproofing prepared by Fox, Jenney & Gale Architects.
- "Proposed Alterations" drawings prepared by Ames, Child & Graves for alterations to all floors.
- L. Arcadius Lyon cleaned Puvis de Chavannes murals.

1941

- Fine Arts Room renamed Wiggin Gallery for Mr. Albert H. Wiggin who donated collection of prints and drawings to BPL (702). To accommodate the collection, exhibition cases replaced the bookcases, and other alterations of finishes were made.

1942

- New England Deposit Library completed—100,000 books were moved from stacks of the Library freeing this space for administrative functions previously housed in publicly accessible spaces.
- J. R. Worcester & Co. carried out a major roof restoration involving reinforcement of roof trusses and installation of concrete plank at the roof.

1947—Ames & Graves Lighting Changes

- Table Lamps in Bates Hall replaced (405).
- New Electric Lighting System installed in Abbey Room (401).
- Fire Escape added outside of Lecture Hall.

1950s—Milton Lord's Changes

- Book charging desks installed in Entrance Hall (210), and brass railings were installed into marble floor to direct flow of patrons.
- Central Book Return Desk, Information Desk and Library Information Office installed in spaces next to stairs in Entrance Hall.
- North Corridor contained new room for borrower card issuance, Central Charging Records, and Cloak Room (211).
- Lighted exhibition cases installed into side wall niches of Entrance Hall.

- Periodical Reading Room (later Newspaper Room) became Social Sciences Department with Sports and Travel Section also (214).
- Newspaper Collection was moved to small room in west wing.
- Small Periodical Room was made repository for Government Documents (215).
- Open Shelf Department installed in original Catalogue Room (202). Finishes and furniture were changed, basement level was opened up for open shelving.
- Receiving and Ordering Room became Children's Section of Open Shelf Department (201). Finishes, lighting and furniture were changed.
- Bronze handrails installed on steps of Grand Staircase Hall (207).

1951

- Gilbert Small & Co. conducted repair of arcade roof in courtyard involving removal of granite steps and installation of wood steps and wood planking over existing tar and gravel roof.

1953

- Undocumented restoration of Puvis murals done by Finlayson Bros.
- Skylights in Sargent Gallery enclosed. Fluorescent lights installed in skylight recesses.
- Glass exhibition cases installed in Sargent Gallery (703).

1955

- Repair work undertaken on main roof.

1958

- Lighting in Bates Hall upgraded, including addition of lamp shades to standing lamps (405).
- Ceiling in Bates Hall repainted (405).
- Window Curtains added in Bates Hall (405).
- Gilbert Small & Co. conducted repairs of exterior granite platform including repointing of pavers, repairs to concrete structure.

Early 1960s

- \$600,000 appropriation made from Extraordinary Repairs Loan—enabled many repairs.
- Rearrangement begun to prepare for construction of Johnson Building.
- New Conveyor Belt extended into Bates Hall (405).

1961

- Card Catalogue removed from Bates Hall (405) and put into Abbey Room (401).
- Acoustical Tile drop-ceilings installed in old Librarian's Room (420, 421), which was also split into two rooms (then Director of Research and "Officer in Charge").
- Gilbert Small & Co. conducted repairs to arcade roof in courtyard involving removal of wood deck, replacement of tar and gravel roof, and reinstallation of wood deck.
- Upper part of west exterior wall was possibly reconstructed. (Building Dept. permit is only evidence of this work. It is unclear whether it was done.)

1962-63

- New Heating pipes and radiators installed in Bates Hall (405).
- Glass ("herculite") doors installed in west wall of Bates Hall (405).
- New finishes applied to balcony railing, floors, and stairs in Fine Arts Room (702).
- New drapes installed in Bates Hall Made of "coronized" fiberglass drapery material, "Tweed," as manufactured by Thortel Fireproof Fabrics co., or approved equal.¹⁷

1964 (From Specifications)¹⁸

- Periodical Reading Room (214), Children's Room (406), Barton Library (705): Cleaning, repairs and restoration undertaken on tiles, plaster walls, and columns, woodwork, marble, and metalwork.
- In Open Shelf Department (202) on the East wall "where there is damage from leakage, repaint all of one side of the bay in order to conceal all damage."¹⁹
- Rubber Tile installed over terrazzo in South and West Corridors of Special Library Floor (712, 713, 716).
- New lighting installed in South and West Corridors of Special Library Floor.

1965

- "Little Gallery" created in alcove off Fine Arts Room to house Louise Stimson's dioramas (701).
- Plumbing work done by P. J. James Plumbing & Heating Co.²⁰

1966-67

- Planning for the Central Library Addition resumed.
 - Philip Johnson selected as the architect in 1963.
 - Active planning undertaken in May 1964.
 - Progress suspended in 1965 due to revised cost estimates that far exceeded the original.
 - Permission granted in 1966 to undertake review of program and have Johnson prepare preliminary plans for a realistic cost estimate and funding request.
- Overcrowding still a problem.
- Evacuation of Annex building to prepare for demolition for Addition.

- Renovated lower Open Shelf area to house additional books (202).
- Set up new Staff Lounge, Acquisition and Book Preparation areas.
- Science and Technology reference collection moved to Patent Room (218) from third floor.
- Non-reference Science & Technology books moved to Stack Service and serviced from Bates Hall.

1967

- February 1, 1967—Design for Johnson Building formally approved by mayor and Trustees.
- Johnson Building: description of uses and characteristics provided in Annual Report.

1968

- 1918 Annex demolished. Some rearrangement of main building required to house the books formerly in annex.
- Science Reference relocated to north end of Bates Hall.
- Government Documents relocated to Elliott Room (407).

1969

- Vappi & Company, Inc. of Cambridge awarded contract for the construction of the Johnson Building.
- June 6, 1969—Groundbreaking ceremonies for the Johnson Building.
- Johnson Building faced with pink Milford granite from the same quarry, which furnished the granite for McKim's building.

1970

- Substantial progress made on the Johnson Building:
 - Basement slab completed.
 - Foundation walls from basement to concourse and concourse to first floor completed
 - Concourse and first floor slabs completed, mezzanine floor 50% completed.
 - Second floor 33% completed.

1971

- Cleaning of McKim building, arranged by Public Facilities Department, completed.
- Exterior lighting on Dartmouth St. façade installed.
- Work on the Johnson Building moved ahead on schedule.

1972

- December 11, 1972—dedication and opening of the Johnson Building.
- Annual Report explained function of Johnson Building functions and physical description.²¹
- “The new building is a monumental structure, simple in basic plan, pure in line, functional in design, handsomely and lastingly impressive. It conforms with the older building in such major respects as the height of its cornice line, its rectangular shape, its massive proportions, and the use in its exterior walls of pink Milford granite.”²²
- Cost of the Johnson Building—\$24,100,000.

1973–1974 (January to June)

- Opening of the Johnson Building enabled changes to be made in McKim building.
- New quarters for microtext and document services on first floor.
- Research Reference Service for Humanities, Social Sciences, and Sciences are on Bates Hall floor.
- Expanded Rare Book, Print, Fine Arts, Music and Special Collections on top floor.
- Newspaper Room moved into new quarters.
- West Gallery cleared out and renovated in preparation for Fine Arts Department and Music Department (712).
- Program underway to repaint and refurbish building.
- Administrative offices moved from McKim building to 3rd floor of Johnson Building.
- Massachusetts Historical Commission presented a citation to Boston Public Library certifying it as a Historic Landmark listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

1974–1975 (FY 1975, July to June)

- Renovations necessary to complete relocation of departments within Research Library accomplished.
 - July—Reference and Music and Fine Arts Reading Room opened in West Gallery (712).
 - New Elevator opened to facilitate accessibility to these departments.
 - Music Department quarters (North Corner and Gallery) refurbished and made into Charlotte Cushman Room which housed materials on theater (708).
 - July—Government Documents Department relocated to the area which housed old Newspaper Room (214). The area was painted, and the terrazzo floor was cleaned and polished, and the brick fireplace that had been covered over was exposed.
 - Periodical Reading and Reference Rooms converted to work and stack space for Government Documents (215).
 - March—New quarters for the Rare Books and Manuscripts Department opened in Johnson Building with an entrance at the end of West Gallery of McKim building (708a).

- March—Exhibition area opened adjacent to Rare Books including William Addison Dwiggins Room and Serge Koussevitzky Exhibition Area (708, 711).
- March—Science Reference Department moved into old Lecture Hall (410).
- March—Corridor connecting second floors of old and new building opened.
- June—Social Science Reference moved to old Science Reference Department.
- By the end of summer 1975, Research Library Catalog would be transferred from the Chavannes Gallery (403) and Abbey Room (401) into the Elliott Room (407) that formerly housed Government Documents—then Puvis de Chavannes Gallery and Abbey Room would be restored to their original state and relocations concluded.
- Patent Collection moved back from Emmanuel College and Newton College, and shelved in 7th floor stack area.

1975–1976 (FY1976)

- Delivery Room (a.k.a. Abbey Room) (401)
 - Emptied of catalog trays, but continued to be the delivery point for books from the Research Library stacks.
 - Cleaning and polishing of marble floor planned.
 - Refinishing of woodwork planned.
 - Teakwood with pink marble top antique table installed in center—presented to Library by George B. Chase, former BPL Trustee (This table is now in Venetian Lobby).
- First phase of replanting of courtyard completed—members of Garden Club of the Back Bay restored it to the original format of a Formal Renaissance Cloister Garden.

1978–1979 (FY1979)

- Emphasis on achieving energy efficiency in heat and electricity usage—no conversions of heating units undertaken.
- Trustees adopted gardening design for courtyard proposed by Garden Club of the Back Bay.

1979–1980 (FY1980)

- Matching grant received from Massachusetts Historical Commission to support a feasibility study for restoration/rehabilitation of the McKim building.

1981–1982 (FY1982)

- Examining Committee will review Stull Report now nearing completion to prioritize work to be done in McKim building.

1983–1984 (FY1984)

- Report received from Stull Associates, Inc.
- Priorities for McKim Restoration outlined by Examining Committee:
 - Replacement of mechanical and HVAC systems.
 - Renovations necessary for safety requirements according to current codes.
 - Work on building exterior to make it weather-proof and water-tight.
- Examining Committee also suggested that professional conservators be consulted before doing work on any murals or decorations.
- Water dripping onto bookshelves and inside walls and windows in Social Science, Humanities Reference (705), and Interlibrary Loan Departments.
- Print Gallery needs painting and refurbishing (801–804). Such work was last undertaken in 1964.
- Inadequate lighting in Sargent Gallery (703), Wiggin Gallery (702), and Humanities Reference Room (705).
- Restrooms in deplorable condition, and some have no heat.
- City set aside \$12,500,000 in loan order for restoration.
- “In the opinion of many art experts, the murals by John Singer Sargent were almost destroyed by previous efforts at restoration.”²³

1985–1986

- Introduction to the Annual Report discusses Mayor Flynn’s *A Program to Rebuild and Revitalize the Resources and Services of the Boston Public Library*, which includes extensive restoration of McKim building.

1986–1987

- McKim’s building becomes National Historic Landmark.
- Design development phase of restoration project completed in spring 1987.
- Three main aims of project were:
 - To restore the timeworn building and its celebrated artwork.
 - To increase public access to the building’s historic and beautiful spaces.
 - To reorganize functions within the building to provide more efficient and effective working spaces.
- Restoration Team included:
 - Project Architect: Daniel Coolidge, Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott Architects.
 - Mural Restoration: Conservation Department of Fogg Art Museum.
 - Interior Finishes and Furniture Restoration: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA).
 - Special Advisor to Trustees: Douglass Shand-Tucci, architectural historian.
- Objectives set forth in Stull Report of 1981 included:
 - Conserve the building itself and the integral works of art.

- Reorganize the uses of various rooms to reopen prominent rooms to the public, improve the delivery system, and accommodate changes in departments.
- Replace decayed heating, electrical, and plumbing systems to prevent damage to the building and the art and to provide climate control.
- General plans:
 - Entrance Hall (210): New stair leads to basement, which houses Maps, Government Documents, and lavatories.
 - Ground Floor: Exhibition Room, Lecture Rooms flank Entrance Hall; Tearoom, and Newspaper Room along Boylston Street.
 - Bates Hall Floor: Catalogue, Delivery, Periodical Rooms along Boylston Street.

1991–1992

- October 8, 1991—Official launch of the restoration of McKim's building.
- Phase I Contract awarded to Peabody Construction Company of Braintree for \$10.8 million.
- Phase I included:
 - Replacement of plumbing and wiring systems.
 - Renovation of basement to make space for Government Documents and Map Departments.
 - Construction of Ground Floor exhibition and lecture spaces.
 - New public restrooms.
 - New public staircase to lower level.
 - Modernization of elevator system.
 - Some restoration of Dartmouth Street lobby.
 - Installation of climate controls, fire detection equipment, and sprinkler systems.

1994–1995

- May 1994—official reopening of McKim building.
- Phase I completed.

1996

- October—Phase II work began by Lee Kennedy Contractors
- Phase II included:
 - Restoration of public rooms on Bates hall floor except Abbey Room
 - Renovation of stacks and office spaces
 - Remodeling of northwest rooms on ground and Bates Hall levels to create new passages between McKim and Johnson Buildings.
 - Repair of arcade roof.

1997

- September—Bates Hall reopened.

1998

- June—Phase II work nears completion.
- Phase IIA work in progress.
- Phase IIA includes:
 - Repair of additional windows.

1999

- Phase IIB scheduled to begin in the summer.
- Phase IIB includes:
 - Restoration of the Courtyard.
 - Repair of the main roof.

Date Unspecified

- Phase IIC work including remaining interior and exterior restoration work.
- Phase IIC includes:
 - Restoration of Ground Floor south, Abbey Room, Special Library Floors
 - Remaining exterior work.

4.0 Selection of the Architect and Design

4.0 Selection of the Architect and Design

The City's selection of a location and architect for the "new" public library took nearly ten years. The protracted process involved the efforts of two City Architects (George A. Cough and Arthur H. Vinal), Acts of the Massachusetts Legislature, an architectural competition, the transfer of responsibility for the construction of the building from the City to the Library's Board of Trustees, and the construction of a foundation for a library building whose plans had not been approved and was never built. Walter Muir Whitehill characterized the decade of trying to get the library project started as "a series of inauspicious fumbles."²⁴

The impetus to build a new library came from the inadequacy of the Boylston Street Library. Built in 1858, the Boylston Street Library was a two story brick and sandstone Italianate building designed by the Boston architect Charles Kirk Kirby (figs. E-1 and E-2). It was designed to have:

... a library hall with alcoves capable of containing on fixed shelves at least 200,000 volumes, a general reading room with ample accommodations at tables for at least 150 readers, a ladies' reading room seating fifty, a room for delivery of books sufficient for at least 200 persons, an adjacent library room for the arrangement of 20,000 books "most constantly demanded for circulation," and quarters for the Trustees and Librarian. The facade was to "be of brick, with stone dressing"; iron was to be used where required, and the general aim was for "a simple but substantial structure, ample in its dimensions, just in its proportions, absolutely fire-proof, and depending for its effect rather upon its adaptation to the use for which it is designed, than upon any ornamental architecture or costly materials."²⁵

Despite the good intentions of the Trustees, the great popularity of the library, combined with its design and functional deficiencies, made the Boylston Street building inadequate within a decade of its construction. Problems related to limited space, collections use and organization, and light and ventilation plagued the library. Investigations into improving and expanding the Boylston Street Library revealed that:

Light and ventilation would not be improved without major rebuilding. Bates Hall, with its tiers of alcoves and galleries, looks very fine, but as the building was without working rooms for the staff, all collating, cataloguing and preparation of books for the shelves had to be done in the alcoves, where there was scarcely room for two people to pass beside the tables. Moreover, the binders who had been employed since 1863 in making repairs "are necessarily put to some inconvenience in timing the noisier parts of their trade to intervals when the hall is free from readers."²⁶

In 1878, the Library's Examining Committee recommended to the Trustees that they seek land from the State Legislature for the construction of a new library building. Limitations in the original design of the library, as well as constrained options for expansion, precluded meeting the needs of the ever growing library at Boylston Street. In addition,

the relatively reasonable cost of the newly filled land of the Back Bay and the proliferation of Boston's cultural institutions that were relocating to the area, made the acquisition of a new site desirable.

The State Legislature granted a parcel of land at the corner of Dartmouth and Boylston Streets to the City of Boston for building a new library building²⁷ (fig. E-3). A stipulation of this grant was that construction of the library begin within three years. The parcel granted by the State was rectangular in plan and limited in size. It had 264-feet of frontage on Boylston Street and 125-feet of frontage on Dartmouth Street. To create a more suitable building site, the City authorized the purchase of several properties on St. James Street (Blagden Street) for the sum of \$160,000. The purchase of these properties created a nearly square building site.

With the acquisition of the site, the City, working with the Library Trustees, was ready to proceed with the selection of an architect and design for the new building. The early efforts to choose an architect were mired in confusion regarding the design for the new building. There were no precedents for the design of a large public lending and research library, and the City and Trustees struggled with the issue of how the functional needs of the library should influence its design. There was also considerable discussion regarding whether the new library should supplement or replace the Boylston Street Library.

A further diversion in March of 1882 was a directive from the City Council to study the suitability of the English High and Latin School for use as the new library. The School, designed by City Architect George A. Cough, was located on Warren Avenue and Montgomery Street. Recently constructed, the building contained more space than required for its enrollment, and it was thought that some of this surplus space might serve as the library. Working with architect Henry Van Brunt of Boston, the Trustees studied the feasibility of using the school for a library. The conclusion of this study, confirmed by a six to one vote of the Trustees on May 2, 1882, was that the building was unsuitable for housing the library. Regrettably, the vote of the Trustees did not end this debate. One of the dissenting Trustees, William Whitmore, requested that a minority report that studied the feasibility in further detail be presented. The process of presenting the minority and majority reports consumed the remainder of 1882. Finally on April 14, 1883, Mayor Palmer approved the purchase of the St. James Street lots for \$180,000 and granted \$450,000 for the erection of a new library building in Copley Square, putting an end to the question of using the school for the library.

Then, nearly three years into the process of selecting an architect, the City launched a competition for the design of the new public library in Copley Square. On April 21, 1883, the time limit for the construction to begin on the library was extended for another three years. For the competition, the Trustees and City prepared a description of the design

requirements and invited all interested architects to prepare a design for the new building.

Twenty designs were submitted for the new library and first prize was awarded to Charles B. Atwood of New York; second prize to Thomas O'Grady and Franz E. Zerrahn of Boston; third prize to Charles L. Luce of New York; and fourth prize to Horace F. Burr of Boston.

Although the prizes were awarded and the \$10,000 allocated for the prize money expended, all of the designs submitted were judged unsuitable for the new library building. Criticism of the designs suggested that they had been prepared by draughtsmen, rather than architects with library design experience. The architects responded to these criticisms by saying that the specifications were overly restrictive. Thomas O'Grady cites the following example of their limitations:

All the rooms, according to our plan, were only 15 feet in height. We had nothing to do with that. The conditions made it imperative that we should make them that way. It is a great mistake, however, to build in that way. The large hall on the second floor must be about 125 x 60 feet, or, rather a room of 75,000 square feet. Now, to give such a room a height of only 15 feet is simply ridiculous. The room ought to be higher than that, if only for the sake of good ventilation and good light, not to say anything of its beauty.²⁸

The competition failed, and the responsibility for the design of the new library reverted to the City Architect, Arthur H. Vinal. With only a year until construction of the building was required to begin (April 1886 was the extended deadline), Vinal was charged with the responsibility to design a building that would meet with the approval of the Trustees and could be built for the sum of \$450,000.

Vinal's relationship with the Library Trustees and the Boston press deteriorated over the year that he worked on the design for the new library. Vinal was slow to produce the drawings for the building and ultimately never produced a full set of drawings for a design that was approved. To date, Vinal's drawings for the Library have not been located. However, a detailed description of the building in the *Boston Transcript*, dated June 1886, describes the building as follows:

The building fronts on Dartmouth Street, opposite Copley Square, extending from St. James Avenue to Boylston Street. According to the plans prepared by City Architect Arthur H. Vinal, the building has a frontage of 224 feet, the main section extending back 48 feet on St. James Avenue and Boylston Street. At the rear of the main building is an annex 30 x 54 feet, connecting the public rooms with the book stack, which is 74 x 84 feet. The main building and the book stack are three stories in height. All the requirements are complied with; the building is fireproof, sufficiently lighted by day without artificial means, thoroughly ventilated, and evenly heated.²⁹

The article goes on to describe, in detail, the interior rooms of the library, primarily their size and function. There is little information about either the interior or exterior finishes for the building.

Ralph Adams Cram writing about Vinal's design for the new library building, condemned it as follows:

A library building being determined upon, the plans were produced by a certain city official, and they were in all respects an example of what Richardson's own style could become at the hands of a sincere but incompetent disciple—it was a chaos of gables, oriels, arcades and towers, all worked out in brownstone.³¹

With Vinal's drawings still incomplete, the State's deadline for commencing construction was at hand. In order to avoid losing the site, excavation and pile driving began on April 21, 1886. On July 20, 1886, the Trustees contracted with Vinal to construct the foundation for the building. The foundations were partially completed by the winter, when work was stopped due to inclement weather. By the time work was stopped for the winter, \$73,600 had been expended for the construction of the foundations.

Over the winter of 1886–87 debate raged over Vinal's design and whether the City Architect should be responsible for the design of such an important public building as the new library. In addition, the question of the role of the Trustees in the selection of the architect and the approval of the design for the building was raised again. A newspaper article, dated January 29, 1887, describes the concerns as follows:

By inspection of the acts of the legislature relative to the Public Library and its Trustees, it will readily be seen how powerless those gentlemen are in directing the work now in progress. The architect of the city, by the revised ordinances, Chapter 37, is to prepare all plans. These must be approved by the department for which said building is constructed. After such approval the city architect has charge of the inspection of the work and can approve all bills under contracts he has made for the various portions of the work.

... If the city architect were the ablest in the country, he would be vested under the present law with undue power and able to carry out any architectural design agreeable to his own wishes and caprice, irrespective of the desires and direction of the gentlemen who have made the Public Library a special study.³¹

The issue was ultimately resolved on March 10, 1887, when the State Legislature passed Chapter 60, Acts 1887, which gave the Library Trustees the "full power and control of the design, construction, erection and maintenance of the central library building."³² This authority was delegated with the provision that the work should not begin until full general plans for the building had been prepared.

With their newly acquired power, the Trustees relieved Vinal of his responsibilities for designing the new library and began seeking a new architect. The Trustees selection process involved no open competition. Rather they consulted two architects who were well-known to the members of the Board—Edward C. Cabot, who designed the Boston Athenaeum, and Charles Follen McKim. Samuel A. B. Abbott, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, was a particular admirer of McKim's work and was very influential in the selection of McKim, Mead & White as the architect for the new library. On March 30, 1887, a mere twenty days after acquiring the authority to select the architect for the new library, a contract was signed with McKim, Mead & White for the design of the Boston Public Library.³³ The McKim, Mead & White contract is included in Appendix 11.4.

5.0 McKim's Design

5.1 Design Derivation

5.2 Design Development

5.0 McKim's Design

5.1 DESIGN DERIVATION

With the tumultuous decade of architect and design selection shadowing his commission, Charles Follen McKim embarked upon the task of designing the new Boston Public Library. Public skepticism about whether the library would ever be built, the amount of money already spent for the proposed building with nothing to show for it, and the selection of a New York architectural firm for the design of a major public building in Boston, combined to create an emotionally charged climate in which McKim began his work. This climate, combined with the absence of design precedents for a large public research and lending library and the design limitations imposed by the Copley Square site, might have stymied an architect with less skill and self-confidence. For McKim, the challenges of the design of the Boston Public Library energized his creative genius.

Whether it was the hard lesson learned by a decade of design failures or the strong personality of Charles McKim, the Trustees entrusted the design of the library to McKim without specific design criteria. Building materials were not specified, room sizes and uses were not designated, and the cost of the building was not stipulated. The sections of the Trustees contract with McKim, Mead & White relating to design criteria are very vague. They read as follows:

Fifth. The parties of the second part [McKim, Mead & White] agree to prepare preliminary studies, general drawings, specifications, details, estimates, and drafts of contracts for all work, interior and exterior, necessary for the erection and completion of said building. all of which studies, drawings, specifications, details, estimates and drafts shall be subject to the approval of the parties of the first part [BPL Trustees].

Sixth. The parties of the second part agree to furnish the parties of the first part with a model of suitable material, of the proposed building, before they shall be called upon to approve the final plans for the said building.³⁴

This level of design freedom, as well as the newly acquired responsibility for the building of the library by the Board of Trustees, undoubtedly contributed to the creativity and success of McKim's design.

McKim's response to the political climate in Boston, particularly during the building's design phase, appears to have been to ignore it largely. During the time he was designing the building, McKim set up an office in the home of his late wife, Julia Amory Appleton, at 53 and 54 Beacon Street in Boston.³⁵ Although he was working in Boston, he was little influenced by what the politicians, press or people of Boston deemed appropriate. The absence of newspaper articles during this period of time confirms the public's lack of

knowledge of, or opinion regarding, McKim's work during the design phase of the building.

The constraints of the Copley Square site included the size of the plot of land, the size and style of the surrounding buildings, and the Vinal foundations. The site was bounded on three sides by streets—Boylston Street (north), Dartmouth Street (east), and St. James (now Blagden) Street (south) and on the west by the buildings of Harvard Medical School. The other Copley Square buildings, recently constructed on the newly filled land of the Back Bay, included H. H. Richardson's Trinity Church (Dartmouth Street), Cummings and Sears' New Old South Church (Boylston Street), Sturgis and Brigham's Museum of Fine Arts (Huntington Avenue) and the S. S. Pierce Store (corner of Huntington and Dartmouth) designed by S. Edwin Tazobey. This collection of masonry buildings, constructed of brick, brownstone, and terra cotta, stylistically represented the picturesque Gothic and Romanesque Revivalism that dominated mid-19th century American architecture (fig. E-4). McKim's response to these buildings was to design a library building that was decidedly different—a Renaissance Revival building. McKim's library was to be square and simple, rather than picturesque; it was to be constructed with a single, light colored masonry material rather than multiple dark colored brick and stone; and its orientation was to horizontally span Dartmouth Street rather than vertically reach for the sky. McKim's Renaissance Revival design precluded the use of Vinal's picturesque foundations, which were eventually demolished.

McKim's design sources for the Boston Public Library have been written about extensively by architectural historians. They include Labrouste's *Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève*, Alberti's *Tempio Malatestiano*, and the *Cancelleria* and *Colosseum* in Rome.³⁶ Leland Roth states:

McKim first considered the Louvre Pavillions, the Farnese Palace and Duban's *Ecole des Beaux Arts* as formal models, devoting several months to this but eventually setting upon Labrouste's *Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève*, Paris, which he considered "the best type and the best scheme in its outward expression and also its arrangement."³⁷

Richard Wilson describes the Library's design derivation as follows:

Modeled in the form of a freestanding Italian Renaissance palazzo, the building also had origins in Henri Labrouste's *Bibliothèque Sainte Geneviève*, Paris and Alberti's *Tempio Malatestiano*, Rimini. The Paris library provided the organization for the front facade, the large piano nobile reading room and the entry sequence. McKim has shortened the long arcade of the Labrouste building to thirteen arches, thereby confining the building into a more separate entity. The depth and detailing of McKim's arches recalled Alberti's *Tempio*.³⁸

William Jordy added a third source of inspiration for McKim's design—Richardson's Marshall Field Wholesale Store in Chicago. Writing about the influence of Richardson, Labrouste and Alberti, Jordy says that:

The famed front is thrice sanctioned. It is sanctioned, first, by the example of Richardson's Marshall Field Wholesale Store; then by the facade of one of the finest of modern library buildings, Henri Labrouste's Bibliotheque Sainte-Genevieve in Paris (1844–50); finally, by the side elevation of Leon Battista Alberti's San Francesco (Tempio Malatestiano) in Rimini (1447–56). And to these sources of specific inspiration, McKim himself, who was sensitive to charges of having copied Labrouste, alluded to the regular arcuation of the Roman Colosseum as a starting point for his own repetitive arches. Roughly, Richardson provided the general compositional scheme, a scheme so commanding that it forced itself on innumerable American designers in the late eighties. Labrouste furnished a specific composition immediately applicable to McKim's commission. Alberti suggested motifs for detail and, above all, encouraged McKim in his linear refinement of Labrouste's design.³¹

McKim's design for the courtyard was inspired by the Cancelleria in Rome. Quoting Jordy again:

For the court, he returned to the Cancelleria, literally reproducing its arcade, although the arcade lost much of the lithe attenuation of the original in its cruder carving and what appear to be its squatter proportions. Actually, the arcades are exactly the same height as those on the ground story of the Cancelleria, but the space between the columns (the intercolumniation) is wider. The feeling of greater horizontality resulting from this spacing, together with the gentler rise of the arching, account for the squatter appearance. The projection of the staircase into the courtyard compromises the pristine rectangularity of the prototype.³²

McKim, himself, confirmed that the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve served as a model for the Boston Public Library. He stated the following about his design process:

At last we had reached this scheme, of which we were ready to say that, if it is not an ideal thing, at any rate it will make a respectable building, as far as we know. We recognized that it wasn't our scheme, but at the end of six months we went to the trustees and said, "Here, we have studied into the matter for six months, and we are satisfied that our opportunity is to adopt a principle which has been already worked out in architectural construction of a library, rather than to attempt to give you something of our own, which is so much beyond us that we don't feel that we can do it; and on the whole we propose to you to base our design on one of two or three structures." We started on the pavilion of the Louvre as one of the possibilities, and took the Farnese Palace as another. As I say, this evolution went on until we finally turned in despair to L'Ecole des Beaux Arts as the best work of the century; and, having a library in its second story, it might fairly be looked to for successful results. Finally, however, we threw that away. At the end of eight months we were in despair, because we hadn't proposed to the trustees anything we could call our own, or which was what we felt they would approve. Then we made our last and final effort, feeling that we were before the public and had not accomplished anything, and that eight months had slipped away. We finally, however, settled upon a model for a library building, which we founded on the St. Genevieve Library, in Paris, which we recognized and believed to be the best type and the best scheme in its outward expression, and also in its arrangement, for a library building.³³

Interestingly, McKim did not comment on the influence of Alberti or Richardson.

A comparison of the Boston Public Library and the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve reveals immediate design similarities. They include:

- Rusticated first stories with an arcade above.
- Arcades filled with windows with carved stone tablets and small windows beneath each large window.
- Central entrances.
- A large central reading room on the second floor identified on the outside of the building by the arcade.
- First floor with a modest entry and reading rooms on either side.

McKim's use of the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve to develop the Boston Public Library's overall design and function is, thus, quite obvious (figs. E-5, E-6). However, close examination of the Boston Public Library reveals that McKim only used Labrouste's design as a framework for creating his own architectural masterpiece. Charles Moore suggests, "There are resemblances; and also radical differences. The main difference is the marked superiority of the Boston Library."⁴²

What makes McKim's Boston Public Library different from Labrouste's Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve are differences in its proportion and detailing. McKim's exterior ornamentation for the Boston Library creates an architectural "jewelry box;" while Labrouste's far more subdued use of architectural ornament creates a utilitarian "warehouse" like block. Limited by the size of the block, McKim's Dartmouth Street arcade contains thirteen rather than nineteen arches. This shorter length, combined with the height of the platform on which the Boston Public Library was constructed, give the Boston Public Library a taller and squarer appearance than the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve. McKim's square plan for the building and his central interior court further distinguish the general designs of the two libraries. The siting and context of the two buildings are also major differences. The Sainte Genevieve fills a long side of a square where the focus is on the Pantheon. It acts as a background building. The McKim building occupies its own block, creating a distinct presence on Copley Square.⁴³

Comparison of the principal facades of the libraries reveals the differences between Labrouste's and McKim's detailing (figs. E-5, E-29). The Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve has a single, relatively nondescript arched entry. The Boston Public Library's entry consists of three arches, deeply recessed and elaborately carved. The arched openings are filled with ornamental iron gates and flanked by elegant wrought iron lanterns. The first story window openings of the Boston Public Library have square tops; those of the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve have arched tops.

The treatment of the arcade windows in the two buildings is also significantly different. The Boston Public Library's arches are deeper than those of the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve, giving the east facade a much more lively and three-dimensional quality. On the Boston Public Library, the window fills approximately two-thirds of the arched opening; on the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve it fills approximately one-half the opening. McKim's wooden window sash consists of elaborate star-like patterns (frequently called Roman sash) that were painted dark green to imitate bronze. Labrouste's windows have traditional rectangular shaped wooden sash, that in the early photographs of the building appear to have been painted a light color. The carved tablets below the window openings, like the windows, are of a different scale. In the Boston Public Library, the small window at the base of the tablet fills approximately one-half the tablet's height; at the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve the window is a small square that is approximately one-sixth the height of the tablet. On the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve all of the tablets are of similar design; on the Boston Public Library the center three tablets over the entry arches are filled with seals of the Library, the City of Boston, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts carved in pink Knoxville, Tennessee marble.

On the Boston Public Library, the space between the top of the arcade and the cornice is greater and it is filled with a carved frieze. The carved frieze creates a more decorative wall surface above the arcade and clearly identifies the name and purpose of the building, information not found in the architectural ornamentation of the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve.

The cornices and roof of the two buildings further reflect differences in detailing. McKim's cornice consists of a bold dentil course, a bead-and-reel molding, an egg-and-dart molding, and a crowning ogee molding ornamented with lions heads. Above the stone cornice is an ornamental bronze cheneau. The top of the hipped roof has a molded copper cresting whose ends are decorated with elaborate copper finials. In contrast, Labrouste's cornice is a projecting stone slab with shallow surface carving and no metal ornamentation.

William Jordy summarized the differences between the buildings' exterior facades as follows:

In short, wherever we look, the linear complexity and sparkling texture of McKim's detail opposes the relative austerity of Labrouste's. It is, in fact, this scintillant overlay (as it were) of the precise geometry of McKim's elevation, with its nice adjustment of shape to shape, or rhythm to rhythm, and all to the total field, which accounts for its particular quality.⁴¹

For the interior plan of the Boston Public Library, McKim's design inspiration is again most directly derived from Labrouste's Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve. In both buildings, a multi-storied reading room is located along the full length of the second floor of the

principal elevation. The great hall is reached through a modest entry and stairhall, on either side of which are located small reading and service rooms.

Although there are striking similarities in McKim's and Labrouste's plans in the east quadrant of the Boston Public Library, there are also significant differences when the full interior plans are compared. Most notable is McKim's inclusion of an interior court in his plan. The interior court helps to define the square plan of the building as well as the dimensions of the interior spaces and their function. The court, combined with the stacks that McKim located in the southwest corner of the building, created a use pattern that was significantly different from that of Labrouste's rectangular building.

As on the exterior of the building, McKim's variation in detail and finishes for the interior of the building transformed Labrouste's library design into a dramatically different building. McKim's interior design for the Boston Public Library integrates art and architecture to create colorful and exuberant interior spaces, while the interior rooms of the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve are much more subdued and utilitarian in appearance. This difference is particularly evident when comparing the library's great reading rooms (figs. E-6, I-33). Jordy suggests that:

The most evident contrast between the Boston Public Library and the Bibliotheque Sainte-Genevieve occurs in their reading rooms. Labrouste supported two parallel barrel vaults running the length of his reading room on exposed metal arches decorated with open metalwork in a scroll pattern. The double arching springs from the walls to either side of the room and meets in the center of the space, where a slender metal column provides support...⁴¹

The interior of the Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve reading room resembles a great Victorian train shed; while Bates Hall is reminiscent of a grand Roman bath chamber.

McKim's choice of materials for the interior finishes of the Boston Public Library further reveals his architectural genius and independence from Labrouste's design. His terrazzo and marble floors; the marble grand stair; the wall paintings of Puvis de Chavannes, Sargent and Abbey; and the coffered and mosaic ceilings, created spaces whose aesthetic qualities matched or exceeded their functional purpose.

5.2 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

McKim's design for the Boston Public Library took about a year to develop. In their interview with the Committee on Library Department in 1891, when Abbott and McKim are being questioned about the cost of the building, they described the design phase as follows:

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McKim: I simply wish to state that the first six months of that year we spent in the destruction of about everything—I may say everything—that we had done. It was not until September, I think, that we got anything that we thought for one moment was worthy of the consideration of the trustees. So it was not until very late in that year that we had actually hit upon a scheme which we were ready to present to their notice, although we labored upon it constantly from the moment we commenced.

The Chairman: It was about the first of September before you had perfected plans which you considered acceptable?

McKim: That we began to arrive at a scheme, through the evolution that must take place in connection with a building of this magnitude. The idea of a building was in embryo, you may say, until the winter-time. I think it wasn't until November or December—along there—that the design was finally decided upon.

The Chairman: That is, the whole plan?

President Abbott: That is, decided upon to this extent, that we could say to the architect "Go ahead and draw up those plans now and finish them." There was a great deal of discussion at that time as to the material to be used. In the spring we sent Mr. McKim down to Georgia; we had an idea of using some marble produced down there. That was the first design or idea. We found that the marble was not of a suitable kind, and it was only after a great while that we could find a suitable material to build the building of. Before you know the material of a building, you can't really make your design, finally, draw your plans and designs; and it wasn't until toward winter, November or December that we had fairly decided upon plans, so as to let him go ahead upon the work. After that time, I know personally that everything in the work was done that could be done to forward those plans. They were worked upon night and day with all the force that could be put upon the work. I think you had about thirty men, Mr. McKim, employed at that time, didn't you?

McKim: I don't remember exactly; but I had a very large force.⁴¹

On March 30, 1888, the Trustees approved the plans for the building and authorized construction for the amount of money already allocated by the City—\$450,000, minus the money that had been spent for the Vinal foundations. In April, plans and a plaster scale model were placed in the Old State House for public review and comment, and a publication of heliotype reproductions of the McKim drawings was produced. The heliotype drawings, first published in *American Architect and Building News* in May 1888 and later published in the Supplement to the Thirty-Seventh Annual Report of the Trustees of the Public Library (1889 Trustees' Annual Report), are reproduced in Appendix 11.3 of this report.

The heliotypes reveal some of McKim's design evolution for the exterior of the Boston Public Library. In two of the illustrations for the building, the Dartmouth Street entry is shown with a single arched opening with a balcony above holding a standing sculptural figure (figs. H-14, H-11). In two other illustrations, three arched openings have been created, but only the center opening allows passage (figs. H-2, H-10). The lower portion of the side entries are filled with carved stone tablets. A reproduction from the model

shows three, fully-open arched openings (fig. H-3). Other changes that occur in the building's exterior design include: the replacement of the arched first story windows with rectangular windows; the changing of the inscription from Latin to English; and, the addition of the bronze cheneau at the cornice and the copper cresting at the roof ridge. McKim's later addition of the elaborate wrought iron entry lanterns and entry grilles further embellished this early design.

McKim's design evolution on the interior of the building is also evident in the heliotype illustrations. Bates Hall is shown devoid of furnishings (most notably bookshelves and reading tables), but with patrons apparently admiring its space and architectural finishes (fig. H-16). This illustration suggests that McKim's design for Bates Hall was guided more by architectural drama than function. It also shows Bates Hall's north apse with murals that were never executed and a carved inscription at the level of the first story that was executed in a far simpler form at the cornice above the arcade.

The Special Library floor is shown in two illustrations with much more elaborate finishes than were ever carried out. One rendering labeled "Special Library (Barton)" shows the room with an arched and ornate ceiling that was never executed (fig. H-5). Another, entitled "West Gallery—Special Library Floor," illustrates the corridors with an overlay of Renaissance detail and sculpture that was never executed (fig. H-14).

Some significant spatial and functional changes were made to the plan drawings, as well. The original entrance from Boylston Street was to be a single arched opening with no carriage entry. Also, on the ground floor, the rooms that became the Catalogue and Periodical Rooms in the northeast and southeast corners were each divided into two small rooms in McKim's early designs. The stacks were shown occupying the west half of the ground and second (Bates Hall) floors. As built, they occupied only the southwest corner of these floors. The Trustees' Room was to be oval in shape and occupy the space that became the area that services the Delivery Room in McKim's final design. As built, it is located on Entresol A and is rectangular in plan. On the Special Library floor in McKim's early drawings, there is a corridor running around the north, south and west wings. This corridor allowed the separate rooms to be created for the different areas of the special libraries. As built, entrances are en suite—there is no corridor, and one library area leads into another (figs. H-7, H-8).

A final noteworthy inclusion in McKim's Boston Public Library study drawings is the drawings of Copley Square (figs. H-1, H-4). These drawings reveal McKim's keen awareness of the context in which the new Boston Public Library was to be constructed, both in terms of its relationship to the street and the square, and to the surrounding buildings. McKim further suggested a plan for the "rearrangement" of Copley Square (fig. H-7). In his plan the grassy plots that framed Huntington Avenue were to have been

removed, the square paved, and a simple Roman fountain placed in its center. None of McKim's changes for Copley Square were executed, although it has been redesigned multiple times in the one hundred years since the Library was built.

McKim's design for the Boston Public Library was generally well-received by the citizens of Boston. However, its contrast in style and building materials to the existing buildings in Copley Square did not go unnoticed. A local newspaper writer expressed these sentiments:

Its style of architecture is indescribable; even the architects admit there is nothing like it on the face of the earth. Lovers of the antique, the trustees and some art students, say its general outline is beautiful beyond expression. The average citizen says just the reverse.⁴⁷

With McKim's design approved by the Trustees and publicly displayed, it was immediately obvious that the building was going to cost more than the \$358,000 that remained of the funds that had been allocated for its construction. At the request of the City Council, McKim prepared an estimate of \$1,165,955 for the building. Hastily prepared, this estimate, approved by the City Council on May 7, 1888, would be greatly exceeded and would plague McKim and the Trustees throughout the construction of the building.

Through the summer of 1888, McKim continued to work on the drawings for the Library. In July, the contract for the construction of the Library was advertised, and on July 23, the contract was awarded to Woodbury and Leighton.⁴⁸

6.0 Library Construction

- 6.1 Laying of the Cornerstone**
- 6.2 The Construction Years**

6.0 Library Construction

6.1 LAYING OF THE CORNERSTONE

The cornerstone for the McKim Building was laid on November 28, 1888. The program began with formal ceremonies at Old South Church. Oliver Wendell Holmes began the celebration with a poem he had written for the occasion.

Proudly, beneath her glittering dome,
Our three-hilled city greets the morn;
Here freedom found her virgin home—
The Bethlehem where her babe was born.

The lordly roofs of traffic rise
Amid the smoke of household fires;
High o'er them in the peaceful skies.
Faith points to heaven her clustering spires.

Can Freedom breathe if Ignorance reign?
Shall Commerce thrive where anarchy rule?
Will Faith her half-fledged brood retain,
If darkening counsels cloud the school?

Let in the light! from every age
Some gleams of garnered wisdom pour,
and, fixed on thought's electric page,
Wait all their radiance to restore.

Let in the light! in diamond mines
Their gems invite the hand the elves—
so learning's treasured jewels shine,
Ranged on the alcove's ordered shelves.

From history's scroll the splendor streams,
From science leaps the living ray.
Flashed from the poet's glowing dreams
The opal fires of fancy play.

Let in the light! these windowed walls
Shall brook no shadowing colonnades.
But say shall flood the silent halls
Till o'er yon hills the sunset fades.

Behind the ever-open gate
No pikes shall fence a crumbling throne,
No lackeys cringe, no courtiers wait,
This palace is the people's own.

Heirs of our narrow-girdled past,
How fair the prospect we survey,
Where howled unheard the wintry blast
And rolled unchecked the storm-swept bay!

These chosen precincts, set apart
For learned toil and holy shrines,
Yield willing homes to every art
That trains or strengthens or refines.

Here shall their sceptered mistress reign,
Who heeds her meanest subjects' call,
Sovereign of all their vast domain—
The queen—the handmaid of them all.⁴⁹

Former Mayor Prince then addressed the audience, describing Boston's long tradition of encouraging the diffusion of knowledge. He called attention to the fact that, "the Boston Public Library was the first in the world to allow its books to be taken home to the houses of the people."⁵⁰

Mayor O'Brien then congratulated the citizens of Boston on their commitment to build a new library:

...today we put in position the cornerstone of a new and enlarged building and I am satisfied the citizens of Boston could not be engaged in more noble work. What another generation may bring about it is, perhaps, useless to predict. Our city is growing rapidly in population and wealth, and from the success of our free library and the establishment of other free libraries in the leading cities and towns of the country, I am also satisfied there is a corresponding increase in intelligence and knowledge. Our growth has been rapid during these thirty years and there is one thing we should not forget. We must build not only for the present, but also for the future, and I am satisfied that the new building will fully realize our expectations.⁵¹

At the conclusion of the exercises at Old South, the ceremony moved across the street to a platform built over the new library foundations. The cornerstone was suspended over the foundation while two copper boxes containing symbolic memorabilia were placed in the masonry under the cornerstone. The boxes contained the following:

- Public Library of the City of Boston. Proceedings at the laying of the cornerstone, September 17, 1855.
- Proceedings at the dedication of the building for the Public Library, January 1, 1858.
- Acts and ordinances relating to the Public Library, together with the bylaws of the corporation, 1887 and "Handbook for Readers," containing the regulations of the library; new edition, 1883.

- Extracts from the records of the Trustees of the Public Library of the City of Boston in relation to the new library on Copley Square, March 22, 1887 to October 25, 1888.
- Heliotype plans of the new Public Library building.
- Annual reports, Boston Public Library 1877–87.
- All forms used in administering the library.
- Boston Municipal Register, 1888.
- City Auditor's Report for 1887–88.
- Report of the School Committee.
- Boston Directory, 1888.
- Bronze medal commemorative of the 250th anniversary of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company.
- Invitation and ticket of admission and order of exercises.
- Poem by Dr. O. W. Holmes; addresses by the Hon. F. O. Prince and his Honor, the Mayor.
- Photographs of the Trustees, of William W. Greenough, his honor, the Mayor and the Common Council.
- A silver plate with this inscription: "The cornerstone of the second building for the Public Library of the City of Boston, laid on the 28th day of November." Trustees of the Library—Samuel A. B. Abbott, President, Henry W. Haynes, William H. Whitmore, Frederick O. Prince, Phineas Pierce; Librarian—Mellen Chamberlain; Architects—McKim, Mead & White.

The second copper box, 16 1/2-inches by 12 1/2-inches contained all the newspapers and periodicals published in Boston.⁵²

With the laying of the cornerstone, construction of the Library commenced in earnest. Woodbury and Leighton were the general contractors, working with a fleet of subcontractors. Some of the major subcontractors included:

Interior and Exterior Masonry:	Norcross Brothers
Terrazzo Floors:	Murdock Parlor Grate Company
Specialized Interior Stonework:	Bowker, Torrey and Company
Carpentry:	Ira G. Hersey
Furniture:	Mellish, Byfield & Company
Plumbing:	Isaac N. Tucker
Electric Wiring:	GE Company
Ironwork:	Snead & Co. Ironworks ⁵³

6.2 THE CONSTRUCTION YEARS

The years that the library was under construction—1889 to 1895—witnessed the transformation of McKim's design, and of the Trustees' perception of what the library building should be, from a functional library building to a "palace of the people." This transformation revealed itself in several different ways—in McKim's painstaking attention to the selection of the materials for the interior and exterior finishes for the building; in the increases in the building's cost; and, in the dissatisfaction expressed by library professionals with McKim's apparent disregard for the function of the library.

McKim's modification of the design of the building and selection of materials for the building clearly revealed his desire to create an architectural masterpiece. The 1916 BPL Handbook states the following about McKim's choice of exterior building materials:

Time and again the "dummy cornice" of plaster was hoisted into position on the corner of Dartmouth and Blagden streets, only to be taken down and changed to be in more perfect accord with the facade. It was months, indeed before it could be sent away to be put into stone. The bricks of the rear wall had to be made especially, for the architects demanded an unusual length. Even the sand used in the mortar of the brickwork of the Interior Court was the subject of long consideration, and a man had to be sent out to search the shores of Cape Cod for a quality which would be in perfect harmony with the yellow Pompeian brick and granite trimmings.⁵⁴

On the interior, McKim's penchant for detail and perfection is revealed in Frederick Hill's description of his involvement in the construction of the grand stair. Frederick Hill was a young architect who worked with McKim during the construction of the Boston Public Library. In his book, *Charles F. McKim—The Man*, he said the following:

He called me to him and pictured what he had in mind and what effect he wished to produce. He then added the statement that he did not want any pains or time spared in making it as nearly

perfect as was possible, despite the fact that even at that time the expenses on the work had exceeded the total amount of the commission.

Accordingly the work was commenced, using the richer and darker tones for the lower part of the staircase and gradually shading off to lighter ones as it was carried up to and around where the Puvis de Chavannes paintings were to be. The marble for the lower part was to be the Monte Riete, or Convent Sienna, a very beautiful and rather rare marble that came only from a quarry owned by some Monks who would not allow any contractor to work the quarry nor any modern machinery to be introduced. As a result of this policy the supply was limited, for the Monks only got out a block now and then, when in need of funds. They used primitive methods of prying it out, then rolling it down hill and selling it to some dealer.

This meant finding and getting hold of all such marble as had been brought into the United States, was being brought in, or was likely to be brought in during the progress of the work. It was not only a question of getting that particular marble, but of matching the coloring and marking and also grading it so that it would lead up gradually to the lighter toned Siennas of the upper parts of the gallery.

Visits had to be made to the different marble yards where there happened to be blocks of it and also to Corlears Hook where blocks of marble were landed in those days. The blocks were brought over from Italy by ships which used them as ballast and landed them at the Hook, then the marble was sawed into slabs, inspected, accepted or rejected.

This procedure was followed until the work was finally completed. It was then found, on checking records, that in order to produce the desired results, four hundred tons of slabs had been handled in the manner described above, accepted or rejected, mostly the latter, and that sixteen months has elapsed since the work was started.

The results however, justified his painstaking care, for nowhere in the world is there a more beautiful piece of marble work of this type. Mr. McKim had again shown his guiding principle and striven for the best with an utter disregard for what is meant in effort, time and cost.⁵⁵

McKim's "utter disregard for effort, time and cost" led to significant cost overruns. By 1891, the \$1,166,000 appropriated for the construction of the library had been expended, and the building was only partly complete. Before approving additional moneys for the construction of the building, McKim and S. A. B. Abbott were questioned by the Committee on Library Department regarding how the money had been spent and how much money was to be required to complete the library. The full text of this questioning is reproduced in City Document No. 54 (Appendix 11.7).

The hearings revealed that the inaccuracy of the original cost figures was based upon the Norcross estimate and on items that were not included in the budget. Abbott, answering the question of the reason for the cost increase, states the following:

The reason is simply this, if you want to get at it: That we made a mistake, a very great mistake, in relying upon the estimates that the people who figured on that building made. Mr. McKim relies, as every architect in the country does, upon estimates given to him by people who figure on buildings,

and he had his quarter-scale plan, he had all that is customary for an architect at that stage of the building; and he had something more, because he had the model. That model and those plans were submitted for figures, and it was to be supposed that the men who figured upon them did their best, and gave us the best result they could. But that was the result, and it was a mistake.⁵⁶

Abbott goes on to say that items relating to the construction of the building were also omitted from the original estimate. These items included: the architects fees, the platforms and approaches to the building, the shelving and the “decorations”—wall paintings, sculptures and bronze doors. Abbott makes the following vague statement about the decorations:

Yes, decorations. Decoration is very expensive—for instance, in connection with the doors, and one thing and another of that sort. It is very expensive.⁵⁷

McKim, during his questioning, also confirms the inaccuracy of the contractors estimates, but adds that the short time that the Library Department Committee gave them to prepare the estimate also contributed to its shortcoming.

All I can refer back to are the facts. I consulted with Norcross Bros., with Whidden, Hill, & Co., and other well-known men here in Boston, and got a tabulated statement, which is in existence. There was not guesswork, no jumping at facts—that is, as far as within us lay in that week. We labored day and night, with the assistance of these men, and we got a total from which we took, not the highest estimate, not the lowest estimate, but a mean estimate. We went to several men on plastering, several men on iron-construction, several men on granite-work, and so on with each item; referring to the best authorities here in Boston in the different departments of construction-work. We arrived at the best estimate that could be arrived at within one week, and we submitted that to you under protest. We said, “It is a great hardship to compel us to do this;” but we submitted gracefully, because it was all we could do. We were told by your committee that, unless we did it, our year’s work would be for nothing, and under that view of the matter we submitted the estimate.⁵⁸

After a lengthy period of questioning and the submission of a detailed account of what it would cost to complete the library, an additional sum of \$985,560 was approved by the Committee on Library Department on March 4, 1891. The itemized estimate of the cost for completing the library building is included in Appendix 11.7.

The cost overruns for the Library did not escape the notice of the Boston newspapers, who had a heyday criticizing the building while it was under construction. *The Boston News*, reporting on the Trustees’ request for more funds for the construction of the library, printed the following headline: “Public Library Octopus. That Huge Mass Into Which Millions of Dollars Have Been Poured, And Which, Without Ceasing, Demands More.” The article goes on to describe the Library as “an institution which was asking for millions as coolly as if the city of Boston was paved with gold.”⁵⁹

The quality of the granite used for the construction of the library was also questioned. *The Boston News*, in December of 1891, printed the headline, "Faulty Granite. Government Tests On The Public Library Stone. The Result Shows Worst Fears Of Poor Work Realized." The News submitted three samples of granite to the Watertown Arsenal for compressive testing. The source of the samples was not identified—it was merely stated that the specimen were "the kind of granite used in the building..."⁶⁰ Whitehill states that "a reporter stole three inch-square cubes of waste granite."⁶¹ The News summarizes the results of the tests as follows:

One piece has gone above the average, one had fallen below it, and one had succumbed at about the average.

The splendid specimen, the best that could be secured, had only proven of average strength. The piece that was considered almost as good had fallen away below the average and broken the record for poor granite at the arsenal. The hard, flat piece, which was not a fair piece, and which no fair man could hold should have entered into the test, had gone above the average and to the limit reached by the average Quincy and Cape Ann granite.

The test had demonstrated most emphatically that there was faulty material in the building and that for the authorities to longer refrain from an investigation falls little short of criminal negligence.⁶²

There is no evidence that supports the flimsy conclusions drawn by the *News* reporter, and the performance of the granite over the past one hundred years confirms that it was not of inferior quality.

While the criticisms of the press proved sensational and unfounded, the criticisms of the building by the professional library community were more significant and sparked a heated debate with the Library Trustees. Two series in *The Library Journal* revealed the librarians' concern and displeasure with McKim's design.

The first series of articles is based upon the comments of Mr. William F. Poole, compiler of *Pooles' Index to Periodical Literature*, who spoke at a dinner given by the American Library Association in Boston on September 19, 1890. Mr. Poole's criticisms are organized according the interior spaces in the library and they are followed by the replies of S. A. B. Abbott. Speaking about the Bates Hall Reading-Room Poole stated:

During 14 years we think we have made some improvements and discoveries. One is, that readers should have some degree of quiet, some opportunity to study, and be let alone. But here you have a hall 220 feet long, 60 feet high and 40 feet wide, into which you will have throngs of visitors coming, to pass comments on the beautiful architecture and frescoes, for the hall will be elaborately decorated.

Who will be able to study under those circumstances? You might as well try to read outside in Copley Square as in that hall.⁶³

Abbott replied:

If he had taken the trouble to glance at the plans of the library building, he would have seen that there is a space devoted to students outside the main hall fully four times as great as that of the main hall. If he had understood anything about the management of large public libraries, he would have known that main hall for the accommodation of a large number of readers is absolutely necessary, unless the library has five times the funds at its disposal than the Boston Library can expect to have. Furthermore, the main hall itself is secluded and quiet, all persons drawing books and asking for books and making application in a separate room, where they will not disturb the readers.⁶⁴

Poole criticized the Catalogue room as follows:

In our country the first story is the most valuable. In Italy it is used for secondary and menial purposes. Hence it has few and small windows. In Venice that story has not practical value, on account the dampness, the building all standing in water. As one stands in Copley Square, he wonders how the first story, with such a meager display of windows is to be lighted. As I yesterday passed through that story, which seemed like a crypt, I was amazed at the intention of the trustees and architect to place in such a location the cataloguing department.⁶⁵

Abbott replied:

This statement again is absolutely false. In the first place, the cataloguing department is not in the crypt. In the second place, it is not under the building, but above the level of the street, the floor being from 4 to 5 feet above the sidewalk. The room is a room of about 80 feet long by 40 feet wide, and is lighted by 7 windows that are 5 by 8 feet, larger than ordinary doors. It has in addition the light of half another windows of the same size, and is probably as well lighted and comfortable and as well ventilated a room as any working-room in the city.⁶⁶

A final criticism of Poole's is the absence of a role for the librarians in the planning of the new building. He asked the following:

How came this building to be made? Mr. Greenough acknowledges that he consulted no librarians, for he says, they are inexperienced persons, with bees in their bonnets. "I had the advice of architects," he adds, "and did as well as I could."

The result is you have a library building, in the construction of which librarians, who are generally supposed to know something about such matters, have not had anything to say.⁶⁷

Abbott replied:

Mr. Greenough may or may not have said what he is stated to have said, but he was certainly as capable of passing judgment on library buildings as any librarian in the country. For 32 years Mr. Greenough was a trustee of this library, and all the time took an active part in the management of it...

Judge Chamberlain, in his reply, says: "I acknowledge our building is merely the library building of the architect." That is his opinion. His acknowledgment does not make the fact. The building is, in

one sense, the building of the architect, but it is a building of the architect in consultation and after study. No librarian may have been personally consulted in the matter, from the fact that, as far as we could learn, there was no one who could help us a great deal, but we have always been ready and desirous to have any person interested in library matters examine our plans and criticize, and we have been ready to profit by such criticisms, and while we have not I say, personally consulted the librarians, we have the opinions as expressed in the press, library publications, and in the large works on libraries published by the government in Washington.⁶⁸

In the February, March, and April, 1892 issues of *The Library Journal* the letters of Mr. C. C. Soule, formerly published in the *Boston Herald*, were extracted. Soule expressed his concerns about the cost and design of the library in Section V "How to Build a Library," as follows:

They [the Trustees] ought to use the public money as economically as possible, in building, as well as in administration, not only on general grounds, but especially because the annual appropriations are always insufficient for the active work of the library, and whatever increases the financial burden of the city must further diminish its ability to devote a sufficient sum to library service...

There are two conditions, moreover, which ought always to limit the outlay on a library building. The first is in regard to size. It is not only unnecessary[sic] to erect a building larger than will answer the probable needs of the next 30 or 40 years, but it is positively unwise to do so. Library science is still in a state of development. Scores of large libraries will be built during that time—each, it is to be hoped better than its predecessors.

In erecting a library building, therefore, the wise plan is to set aside land enough for further growth, but to build only for immediate use, leaving ample opportunity for such extensions as shall not only increase the facilities of the library, but shall adapt them for future enlargements of it a sphere of usefulness.

The other consideration regards ornament. There is no reason why the exterior of the library should not be grand and even ornate if money can be spared for it; but the interior should be simple and devoid of showy ornament.

It would seem to be an elementary rule of common sense that, while good taste in color and form should prevail everywhere throughout a library, no room intended for proper library uses should contain such decoration or ornament as will attract visitors who come to gaze, and not to use books. If statuary, painting, mosaics, or marbles are considered desirable in a library building, they ought to be displayed in the corridors and in show-rooms set aside for that purpose and not needed for study.⁶⁹

The criticisms of the librarians during the construction of the library appear to have fallen on deaf ears. There is no documentation that suggests that McKim paid any attention to these complaints—rather his correspondence and energies were focused on the selection of artwork to embellish the building and the careful selection of building materials and their installation. It was only after the building opened and its functional deficiencies became obvious on a daily basis that significant modifications were made to improve its function.

The actual construction of the building is documented by the construction photographs of the building, the correspondence of McKim and the Board of Trustees, the Trustees Annual Reports, Trustees' Minutes, and the drawings and specifications for the building. Excerpts of the specifications, which are held in the collection of the New York Historical Society, are reproduced as Appendix 11.4.2. It is not known whether this is a complete set of the specifications for the building, since they are not sequentially numbered nor do they have a table of contents or index. The content of the specifications does correspond well, however, with the construction drawings for the building, suggesting that they cover most of the construction work.

The specifications for the library were issued over a four year period. The first specifications were for the construction of the *New Public Library Building on Copley Square up to Bates Hall Floor—July 1888*. These specifications dealt primarily with the construction of the foundation and the exterior walls and the structural ironwork. The second set of specifications was issued in June 1889 for *Work to be Done and Material to be Furnished in the Continuation of the Erection of the New Public Library Building on Copley Square*. These specifications dealt further with the exterior masonry, giving specific mortar mixes and material specifications. Interestingly, the section on cement noted, "The Portland cement is to be an approved brand of the best English manufacture. All cement to be piled in large lots on wharf convenient for inspection, and must be approved by the Trustees before being sent to the building."⁷⁰ One wonders which distinguished member of the Board of Trustees visited the Boston wharves to inspect and approve all the cement for the building. Other work and materials included in the second set of specifications were brick masonry, ironwork, Guastavino tile, terra cotta, rough plumbing and glazing.

A third set of specifications was issued in August 1889 for the *Stone and Marble Work of Entrance Hall and Staircase, New Public Library Building on Copley Square*. The specifications were for Batterson, See and Eisele, who supplied the stone for the Library. The section of these specifications for the "Entrance Hall" has been crossed out. The crossed out portion of the specification is very interesting as it calls for the walls and piers of the entrance hall to be built with the following:

- Green-veined Vermont marble
- Comblanchien or Swiss marble
- Yellow Iowa marble
- Caen stone
- Yorkshire stone
- Amherst stone⁷¹

Specifying six different stones for the walls and piers indicates that this is not a final specification. It is of interest, nonetheless, because it reveals the different stone finishes

that were considered for this space. The walls, floors and ceilings were finally constructed with Knoxville marble. The third specification also includes the stone for the Grand Staircase Hall and Bates Hall corridor.

A fourth set of specifications, for the library roof, was issued and signed in May of 1890. This specification gives a detailed description of the materials that were to be used for the original roof. In November of 1891, the specification for the *Plastering of the New Public Library Building* was issued. The issuance of this specification indicates that the building was enclosed and ready to receive its interior finishes. The specification for the *Marble Work*, issued in April of 1892, reveals that a variety of marbles were considered for interior finishes—Echaillon, Verona red, pink Knoxville, white Italian, and red Champlain. Handwritten changes on this specification also reveal that the choice of marbles for specific uses was changed during construction. In October of 1892, specifications for the interior *Brick and Stone* were issued. A second set of specifications issued in October of 1892 is for the interior *Carpenter Work*. This specification is for the interior wood finishes, specifically the built-in furniture. The species used for this work were primarily American and English oak.

The original construction drawings for the new library correspond with the specifications. There are individual sets of drawings for the different specifications, showing the specified work on each of the floors of the building. The sets also include study drawings of interior finishes and reveal how the finishes were changed during the construction of the building.

The Trustees' Annual Reports provide an informative summary of the construction progress of the library. The 1889 Report noted that the foundations of the building had been finished and a Guastavino fire-proof tile system had been adopted for the ground floor construction. A model of the main cornice was constructed at the corner of the building at Dartmouth and Blagden Streets. All exterior walls were erected to a height of 11-feet above the Bates Hall floor, except the rear section of Blagden Street, which was 7-feet above the Bates Hall floor. The vestibule on Dartmouth Street was finished, except for the carving, and the Blagden Street vestibule was complete except for setting the steps. Finally, the marble piers inside Entrance Hall had been set.

The Report for 1891 stated that "considerable delay has been caused by the postponement until late in the year of the appropriation for the completion of the work."⁷² While deferring the opening of the library, this delay also allowed the exterior masonry to dry before application of interior finishes. One item that was completed was the installation of Louis St. Gaudens' lions in the Grand Staircase Hall. In 1891 there were lengthy discussions and questionings regarding the cost of the library and budgetary issues.

The 1892 report contained a long, detailed listing of the work completed that year. Exterior work included completion of the Blagden Street platform and steps. The sidewalk and railing on Boylston and Dartmouth Streets was finished, and the buffers, curbs, driveway pavement, and statuary pedestals for Dartmouth Street entrance were completed. The carving of frieze inscriptions and tablets on all three elevations of the building was complete. The courtyard arcade and fountain basin was set. In 1892, a great deal of progress had been made on the interior as well. The cellar concreting was completed. The installation of mechanical systems was in progress. So far, the heating apparatus was on; the columns were fire-proofed; and supports were set for the book railway and pneumatic service. The beams, terra-cotta floor and all work connected with the elevators was set.

Details regarding specific rooms were also noted in the 1892 report. In the Periodical Room, the brick wainscot and columns were finished; the radiators were set; the register frames and air-ducts were in place; the fireproofing on the walls was completed, and the floor was ready for terra-cotta.

In the Map Room the brick and stone finish of the walls was complete and the walls were plastered. The ceiling was painted and the marble door jambs and radiators were set. In the North and South Corridors on the ground floor the ceiling was plastered; the walls were ready for skimming and the marble door jambs, wainscot, and electrical conduits were in position. Finally, the stonework for Bates Hall was finished, and the ironwork for most of the ceiling was put in position.

The 1893 annual report stated that work had proceeded satisfactorily, but that the building would not be ready for occupancy in 1894.

The Trustees' minutes, summarized in Appendix 11.5, and the Annual Reports record some of the contracts that were awarded for the construction of the library. They are as follows:

July 1888	Woodbury & Leighton	General Contractor
April 1890	Post & McCord	Iron Roof
May 1890	Lindeman Terra Cotta & Roofing Tile Co.	Tile Roofing
October 1892	Ira G. Hersey	Carpenter
October 1892	Isaac N. Tucker	Plumbing
October 1892	G.E. Company	Electric Wiring
October 1892	Norcross Bros.	Brick & Stone
October 1892	Bowker Torrey & Co.	Marble Work
October 1892	Snead & Co.	Ironwork

The Trustees' minutes also include many entries relating to the artwork purchased and commissioned for the library. There are entries relating to the Abbey paintings in the Delivery Room, MacMonnies' Bacchante in the Courtyard, French's bronze doors for the Entrance Vestibule, Garnsey's ceiling and wall paintings in the Staircase Hall, Sargent's Special Library Floor hall paintings, and Whistler's unexecuted Bates Hall panel painting. These entries indicate that the Trustees had an active role in the selection of the artwork and that it was a supplementary task to the actual construction of the building.

The Trustees' minutes include a few entries that reveal changes to the building during construction. On March 27, 1889, the Trustees approved the substitution of the granite in the courtyard for previously specified light brick with granite trimmings; on May 23, 1890, they approved the substitution of buff Amherst sandstone in place of wood for the wainscot in Bates Hall; and on February 16, 1894, they approved the omission of the grilles on the lower windows.

A final revelation of the Trustees' minutes is the discussion related to areas of the building that experienced problems even before its construction was completed—most notably the arcade roof, the heating system, and the elevator. (See Appendix 11.5 for detailed information).

7.0 Architectural History of the Building 1895–1972

7.1	Introduction	7.3	Interior
	7.1.1 Interior Plan Evolution	7.3.1	Ground Floor
7.2	Exterior		7.3.1.1 Entrance Hall & Corridors
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			7.3.3.2 Music Library
			7.3.3.3 Barton Library
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7.0 Architectural History of the Building: 1895–1972

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The architectural history of the McKim Building for the years 1895 to 1972 is presented chronologically for the exterior of the building and the interior rooms. The time frame of 1895 to 1972 spans the years from the opening of the McKim building until the opening of the Johnson Building. The addition of the Johnson Building significantly changed the use of the McKim building and facilitated the planning for the 1990s Project. This project, undertaken by Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott Architects, is described in Section 8.0 of this report.

Each section of the following architectural history of the McKim Building is divided into three periods. The first period described is 1895, the opening of the Library. The appearance of the Library in 1895 represents the original McKim design and the materials used for the building's construction and finishes. Many of the interior finishes were not completed when the Library opened.

The second period highlighted is from 1895 to 1909. Charles Follen McKim died in 1909, and this time frame was selected to identify the work completed and the alterations made to the building in his lifetime. Because many of the interior finishes were not completed by 1895 and the function of the library required design modifications in its early years, there were a surprising number of changes made to the building in the thirteen years after it opened to the public.

The third period described is from 1910 to 1972. This is a relatively long time frame that includes the construction of the annex on the west side of the McKim Building in 1918. It is a period of time, however, when alterations were made to the building incrementally, and there was no single campaign of remodeling that significantly altered the use or appearance of the building comprehensively.

Within these three periods of architectural history for the McKim Building, selective remodeling campaigns were undertaken. These campaigns provide a framework for understanding the overall history of the building—architects involved and the reasons behind the alterations. They also provide a context for understanding the specific changes to the exterior of the building and the interior rooms described in this section of the report.

Immediately after the Library was constructed and opened to the public, improvements were required. Herbert Putnam, the first librarian for the library once housed in the

McKim Building, took an active role in recommending changes to make the building more suitable to its uses. Some of the issues addressed included: a shortage of space for readers and book storage, a more rapid system of book delivery, better reading areas for patrons, and improved ventilation. By 1898 major alterations had been made to the building. The most pressing issue of lack of space, was partially alleviated by moving some administrative and service functions into the stack areas and Entresol levels. For instance, the Librarian's Office was moved into the second floor stacks to free the space behind the Delivery Room for better book delivery services. Some areas were converted to provide more usable space. For example, the porte cochere on Boylston Street was enclosed to make an extension to the Periodical Room, and galleries were added in the Newspaper Files Room and in the Small Periodical Room. Book delivery was improved with a new pneumatic tube system in the enlarged Issue Department. Much of this early work appears to have been done by the Boston firm of A.S. Jenney and Thomas A. Fox, Architects who worked for McKim, Mead & White at this time, and later became a successor firm for the building. The Trustees' Annual Report for 1899 states:

The opening of the library year found the extensive improvements upon the new Library building and the fittings thereof, for which the City of Boston had provided the sum of \$100,000... They have given to the Library increased facilities for administration, enlarged accommodations for readers, and much needed additional machinery, administrative equipment and furniture...⁷³

After these initial changes were made to the building, little was done within the next twenty years. Horace Wadlin, the librarian from 1903 to 1917 was more of a businessman, and Whitehill characterized his term as one of "orderly housekeeping."⁷⁴ The major physical change that occurred during this time period was the transfer of the Binding and Printing Department out of the McKim building into a building on Stanhope Street in July 1902. The Patent Collection and Statistics Departments were then moved from their locations on the Bates Hall floor into the former Bindery space in the northwest corner of the ground floor. In addition, major repairs to the exterior roof were made involving the replacement or repair of all tiles and re-cementing of all joints.⁷⁵

Charles D. Belden, former State Librarian of Massachusetts, replaced Wadlin in June 1917, and undertook the second major phase of changes in the Library's history. The building was then almost 25 years old. Its general state of disrepair, in addition to its inability to adapt to the changing needs of the Library, became significant issues. Concern was so great that the first mention of the need for an entirely new building occurred in the Examining Committee Reports as early as 1921. They noted that public spaces were "uncomfortably crowded," the stacks were almost full, and some departments were in inaccessible locations within the building. They suggested using the McKim building for special collections and research and adding on an adjacent building for collections to serve the general public.⁷⁶ Little did they know that exactly this plan would take shape, but not for another fifty years.

The condition of the building and its systems was worsening, endangering the collections and making usage of the Library cumbersome for the public. Major repairs were needed for the leaky roof, inefficient ventilating system, and broken-down book railway and pneumatic tube system. The Examining Committee recommended appropriations for “extraordinary repairs,” which were granted by the City to make these and other necessary improvements. The completion of the Blagden Street addition in 1918 alleviated some of the space limitations by providing additional stack space.⁷⁷ In 1925, the first round of repairs was made, and by 1929 more sweeping changes were carried out to relieve concerns of space and accessibility. A \$250,000 appropriation was granted for improvements on the Special Library Floor involving mainly the rearrangement of its uses. This work was carried out by Fox & Gale Architects.⁷⁸

Milton Lord’s administration, beginning in the end of 1931, also produced major alterations to both the internal uses and physical character of the Library building. These changes, however, were delayed due to the economic state of the City in the 1930s. Annual Reports note that very little was done in this decade. Logistical problems that had been temporarily alleviated during Belden’s term gradually became worse, and the building itself continued to deteriorate without funds for the necessary maintenance. In the 1940s, though, work seems to have resumed. In 1940, drawings for fireproofing the entire building were prepared by Fox, Jenney & Gale Architects and “Proposed Alterations” drawings were prepared by Ames, Child & Graves for alterations to all floors.

In 1942, the New England Deposit Library was completed which made it possible to remove over 100,000 books from the central library building. This relocation freed space in the stacks that was then used for various administrative functions previously housed in more publicly accessible spaces within the building. Most significant was the removal of the Catalogue and Receiving and Ordering Departments from the southeast corner of the ground floor. These spaces had been identified by the Examining Committee as being too publicly accessible to be used for internal purposes. Their recommendation to create an Open Shelf Department for both adults and children in this location was finally actualized. The addition of office space in the stacks paved the way for the major changes Milton Lord administered in the 1950s and 1960s.

Lord was determined to make this monumental building into a more functional library as the modern public thought of libraries. The drawings created for these changes were titled “Modernization,” a term which aptly described the changes carried out by Lord. Although he believed he was respecting McKim’s original design, others criticized his sleekly designed, sometimes intrusive, additions to the 1895 building. The Entrance Hall was transformed into the Main Charging Area with desks and railings placed virtually in the center of the space. Lord also opened up the basement to public access. A floor of

the Open Shelf Department and a completely new Audio Visual Department were located on the basement level.

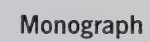
In the early 1960s, a \$600,000 appropriation was made from an Extraordinary Repairs Loan that enabled many long needed repairs to be done. Changes were also made in preparation for the anticipated construction of the Johnson Building. These were mainly rearrangements in the use of spaces and associated minor physical changes. Drawings corresponding to these changes were prepared by the architecture firm of Ames & Graves.

In the Exterior Section (7.2) the history is divided into elements of the building. It begins with the as-built description, which is followed by the two alteration periods described above.

In the Interior section, each significant room is discussed. The first page of the section provides the original name of the room, the room number being used in the 1990s project, a chronology of the use and name changes of the room, and a plan showing the location of the room. The listing of the use and name changes of the room throughout the building's history was compiled from a variety of sources including drawings and written documentation. These sources include, Small's 1895 Handbook, plans/information published in the Trustees' Annual Reports, plans located in the BPL Drawings archive, and relevant magazine/journal articles. Dates were chosen based on when significant changes were made in the room. The plans presented on these pages, which are believed to represent the as-built condition of the BPL in 1895, are actually from the 1897 Trustees' Annual Report.

7.1.1 Interior Plan Evolution

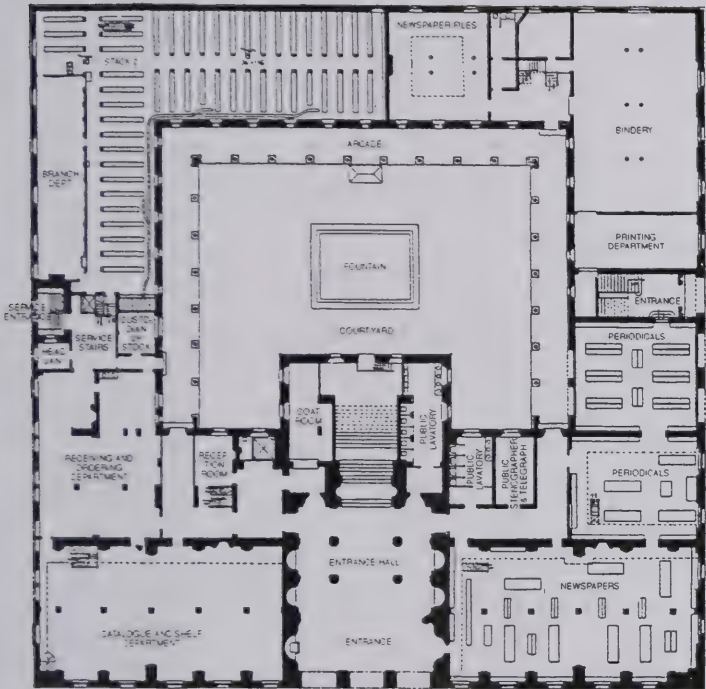
The following plans, from seminal years in the Library's history, illustrate the physical changes made to the building from McKim's original design to just prior to the construction of the Johnson Building. The earliest published plans of McKim's designs were Heliotype prints, published in *American Architect and Building News* in 1888 and then in the Supplement to the Thirty-Seventh Annual Report of the Trustees of the Public Library (1889 Trustees' Annual Report). The *McKim Mead and White Monograph* contains the next incarnation of McKim's design, but this was still not exactly as built. Other plans on these pages come from Trustee's Annual Reports of 1897, 1898, and 1908 years when major changes can be observed. The 1959 plans represent the way the building appeared prior to the Johnson Building's erection.

$N \rightarrow$ 

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

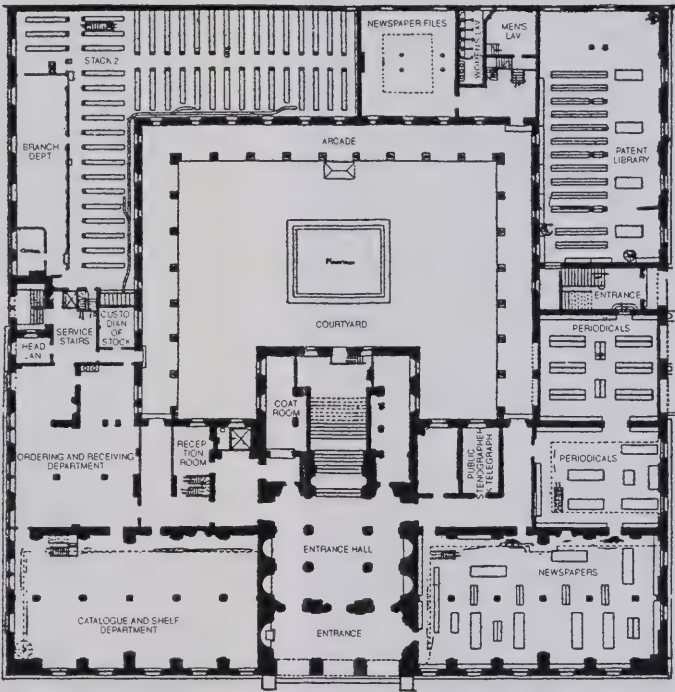
Ground Floor

N→



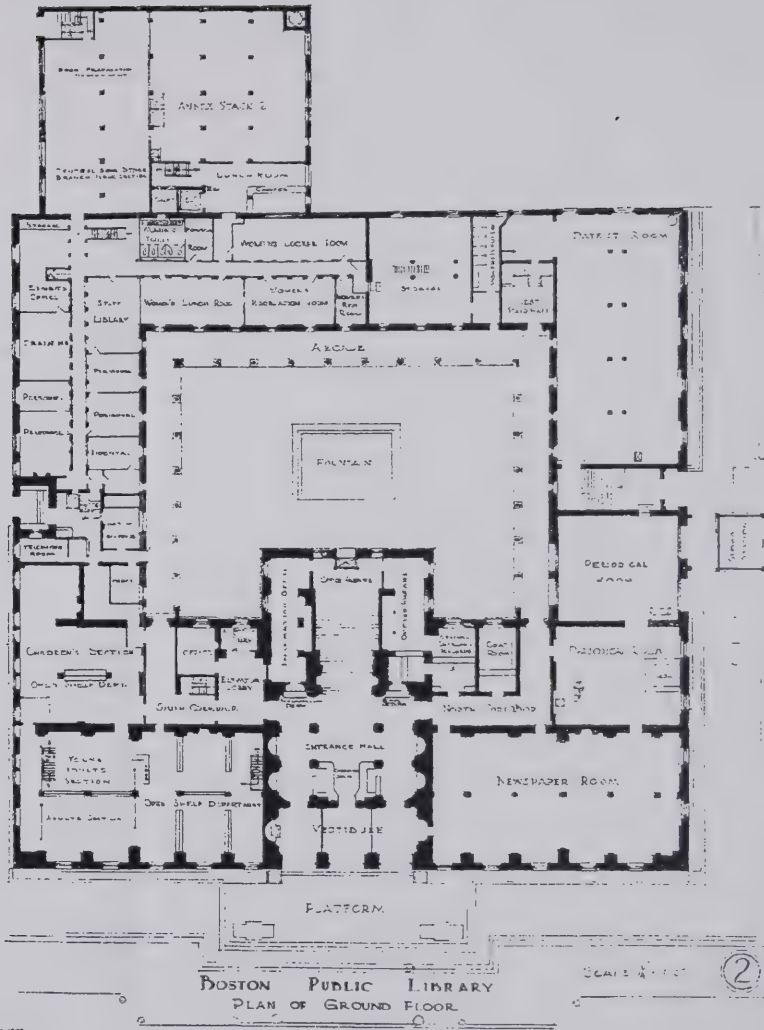
CENTRAL LIBRARY, GROUND FLOOR.

1898



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

1908



BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
PLAN OF GROUND FLOOR

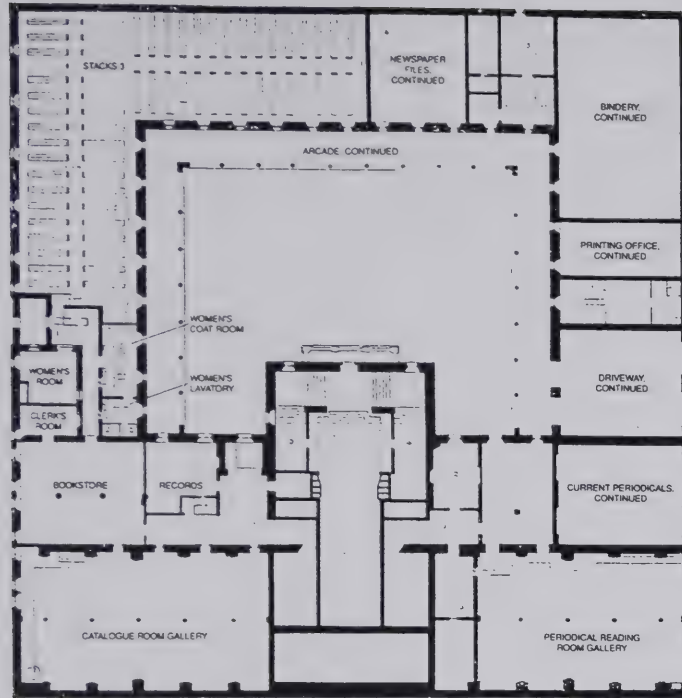
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

2

1959

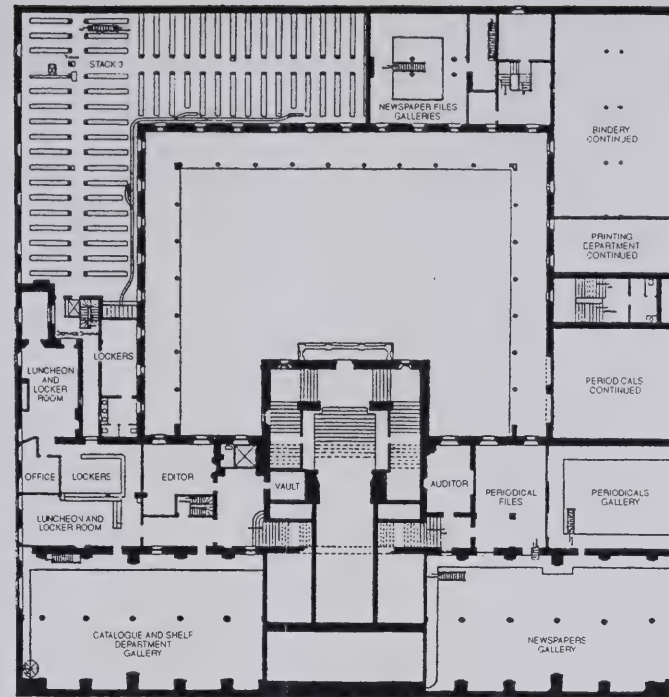
Entresol A

N →



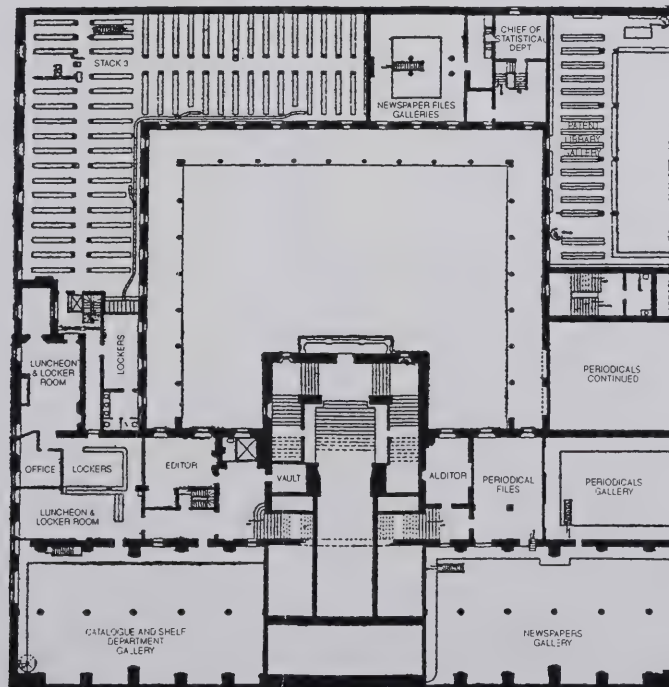
1895

CENTRAL LIBRARY, ENTRESOL A



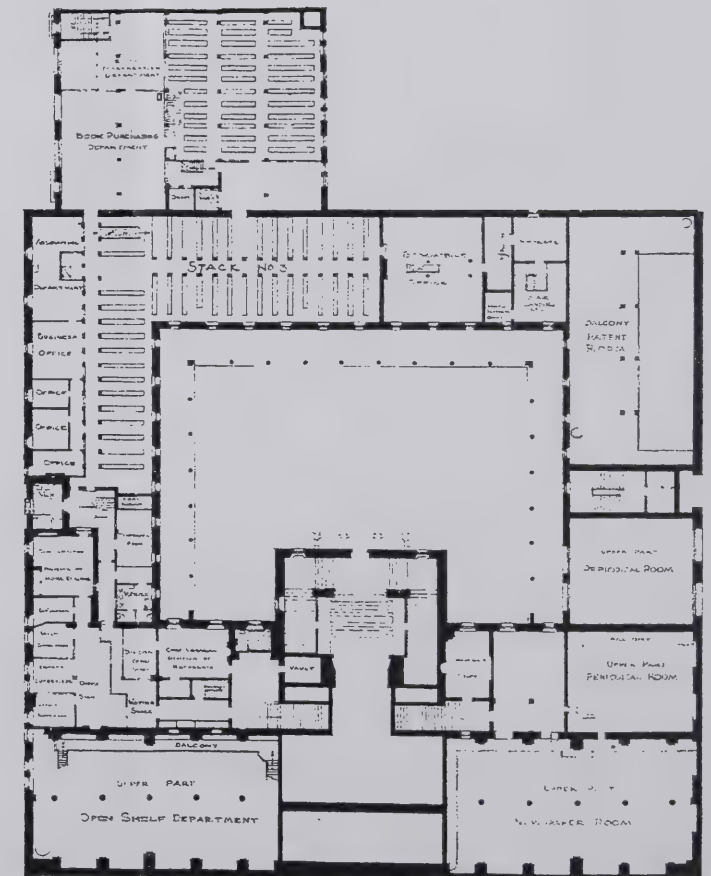
1898

CENTRAL LIBRARY, ENTRESOL A



1908

CENTRAL LIBRARY, ENTRESOL A



1959

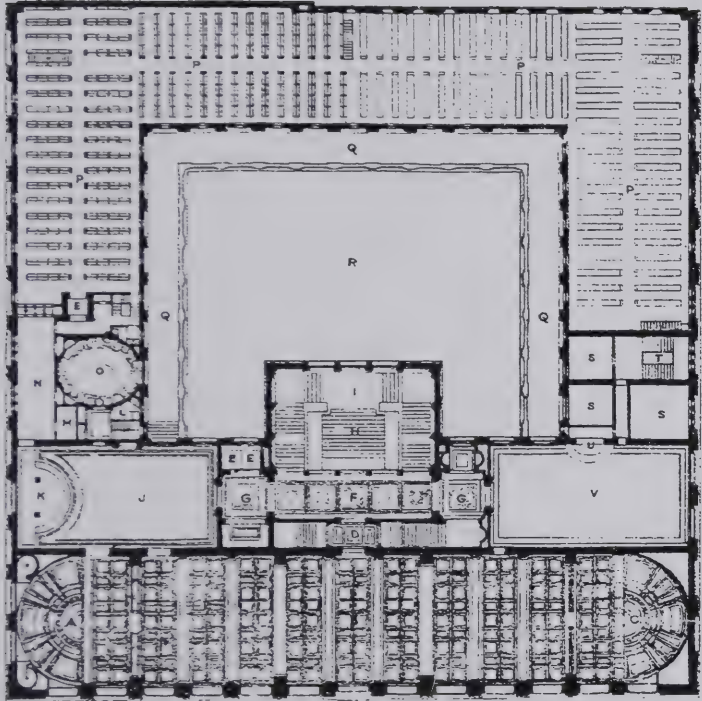
BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
PLAN OF ENTRESOL "A" & STACK NO. 3.

SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

3

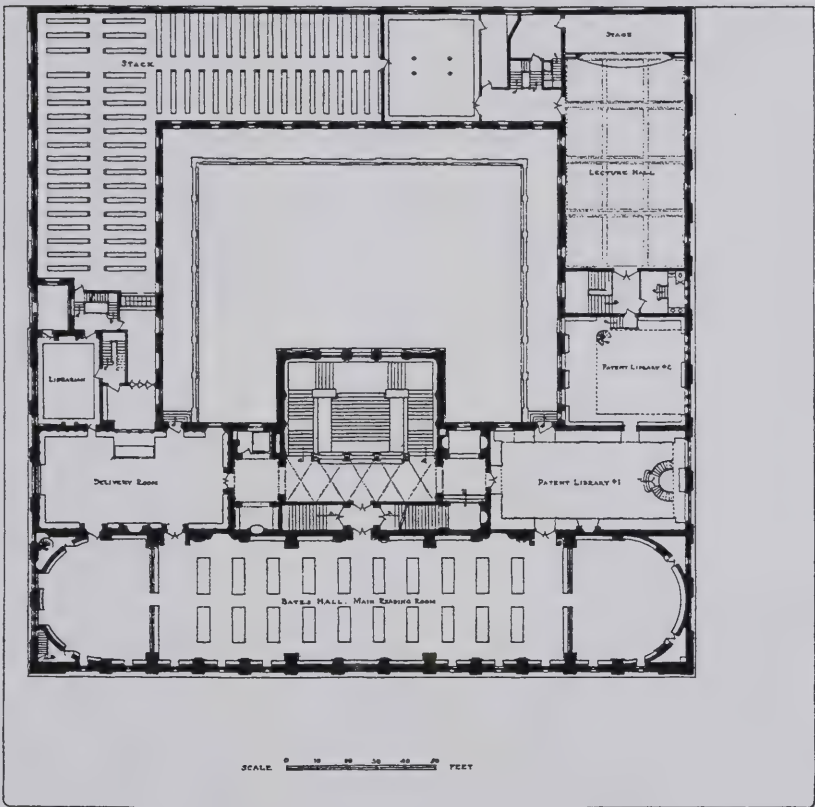
Bates Hall Floor

N→



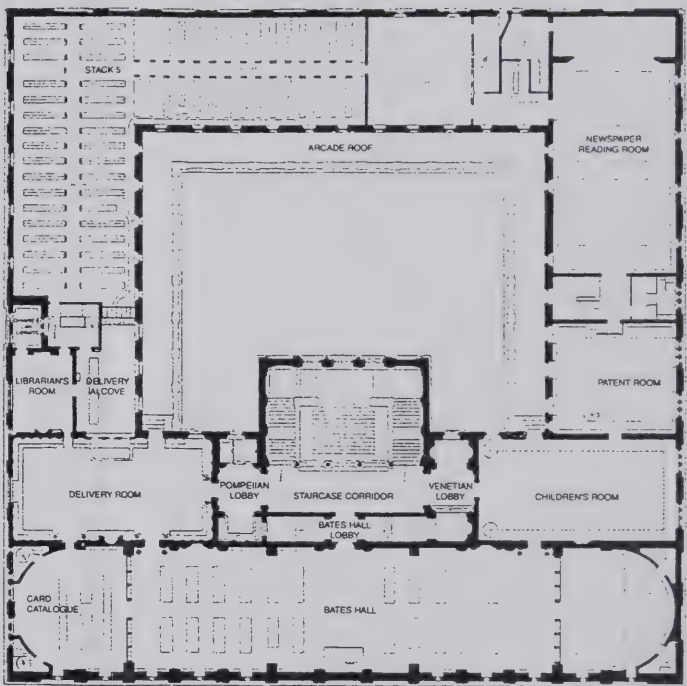
- PLAN OF READING-ROOM-FLOOR.
- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| A. CASEY CATALOGUE | L. LOBBY |
| B. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | M. CLOAK CLOSET |
| C. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | N. READING ROOM |
| D. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | O. READING ROOM |
| E. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | P. READING ROOM |
| F. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | Q. READING ROOM |
| G. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | R. READING ROOM |
| H. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | S. READING ROOM |
| I. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | T. READING ROOM |
| J. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | U. READING ROOM |
| K. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | V. READING ROOM |
| L. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | |
| M. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | |
| N. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | |
| O. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | |
| P. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | |
| Q. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | |
| R. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | |
| S. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | |
| T. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | |
| U. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | |
| V. BATES HALL, READING ROOM | |

Heliotype



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

Monograph

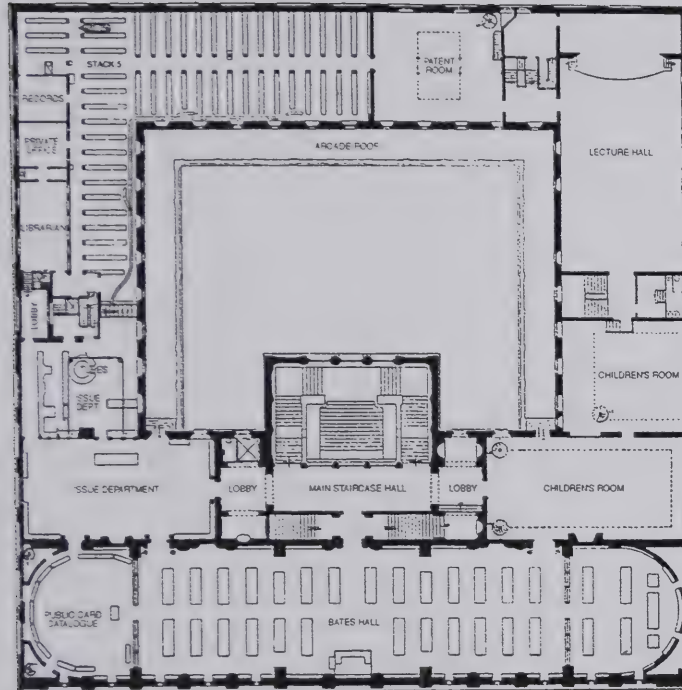


CENTRAL LIBRARY, BATES HALL

1895

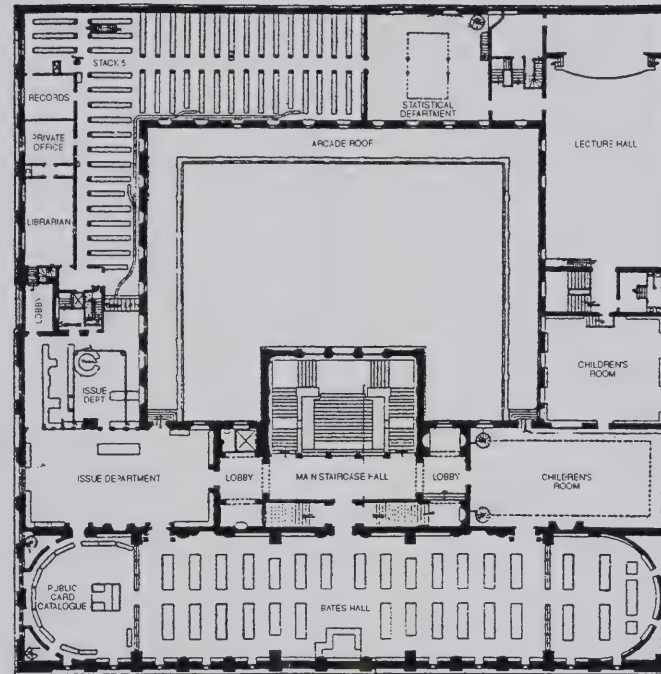
Bates Hall Floor

N→



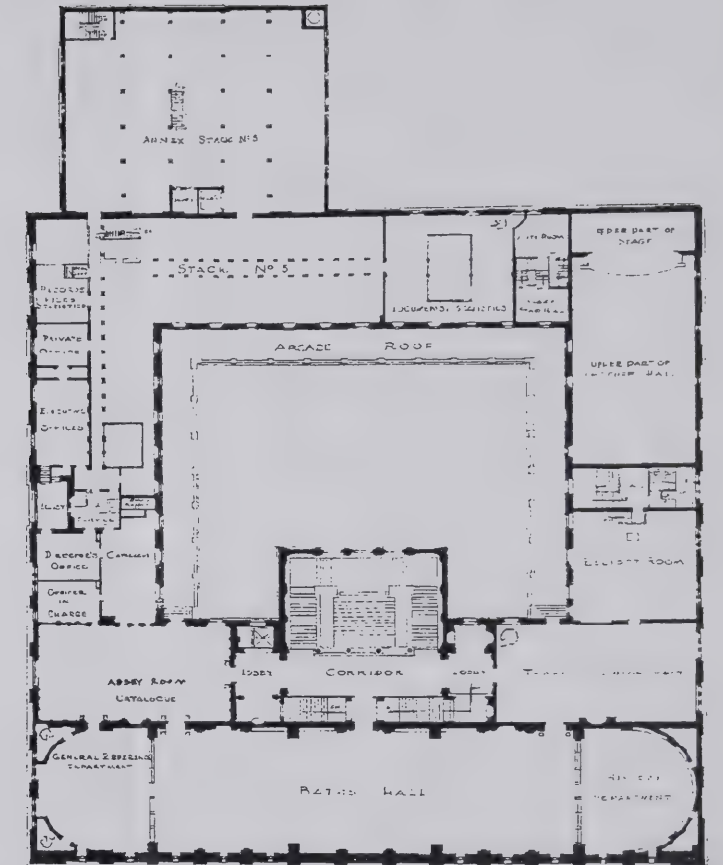
CENTRAL LIBRARY, SECOND FLOOR

1898



CENTRAL LIBRARY, BATES HALL FLOOR

1908



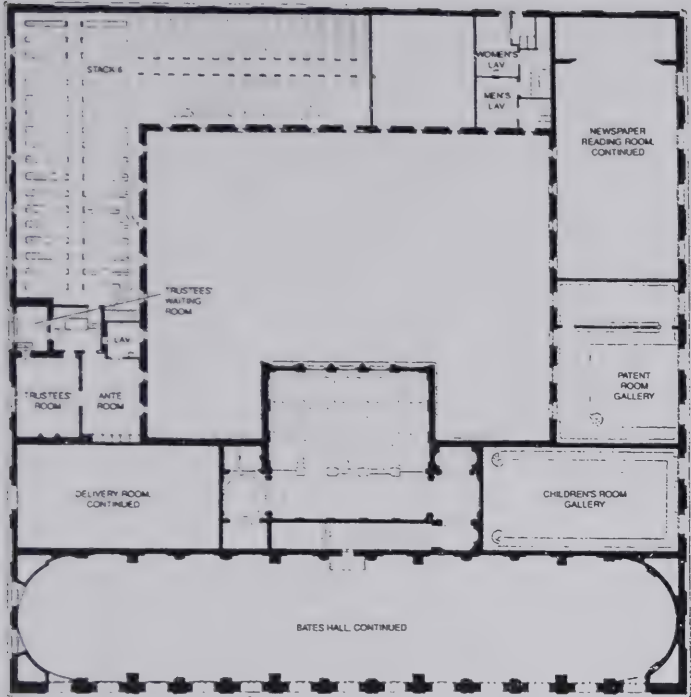
BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
PLAN OF BATES HALL FLOOR & STACK NO 5

SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

5

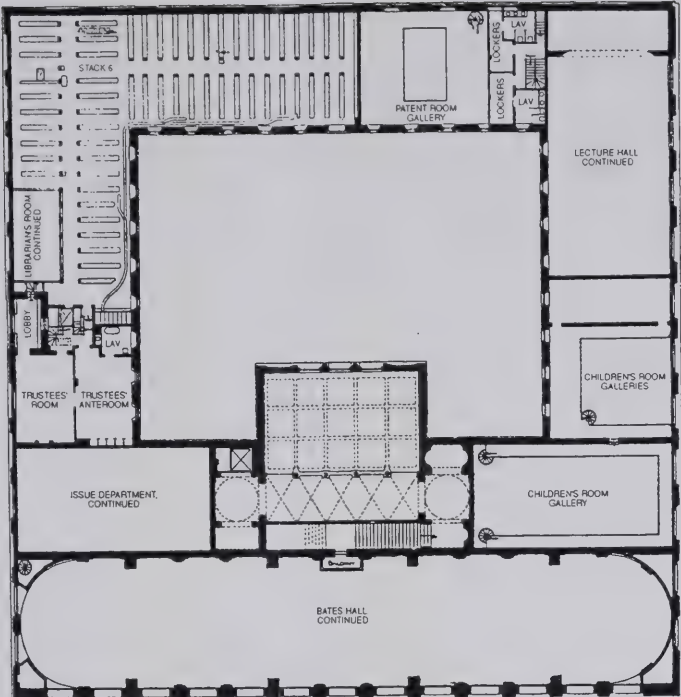
1959

Entresol B
N→



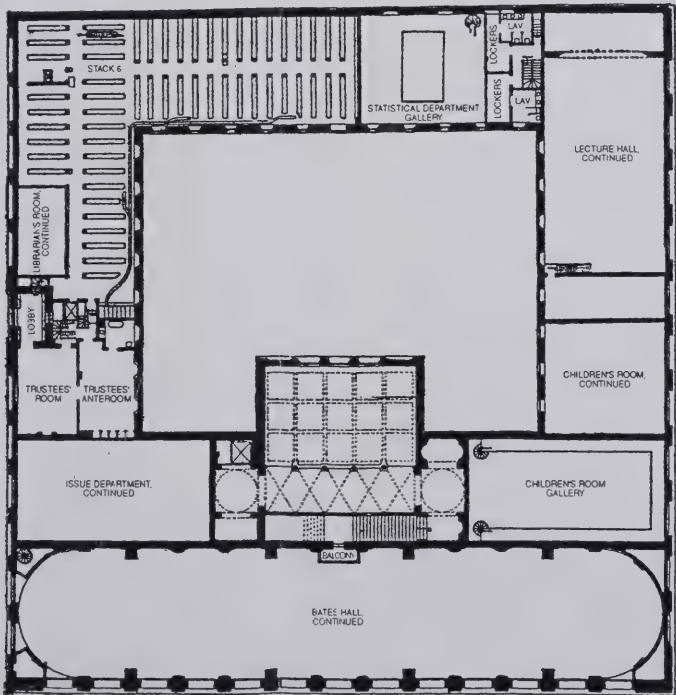
1895

CENTRAL LIBRARY, ENTRESOL B



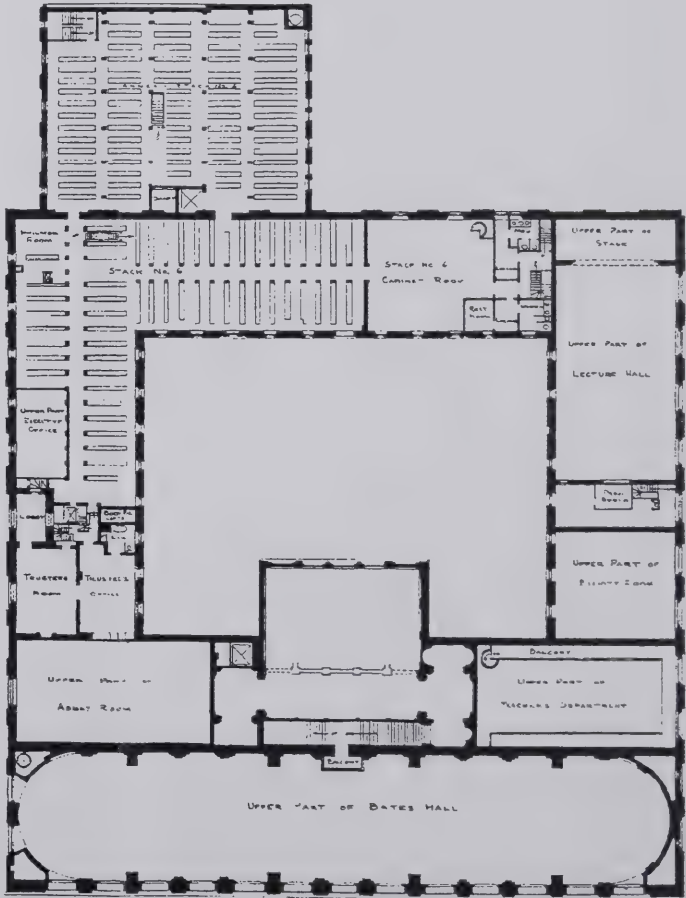
1898

CENTRAL LIBRARY, ENTRESOL B



1908

CENTRAL LIBRARY, ENTRESOL B

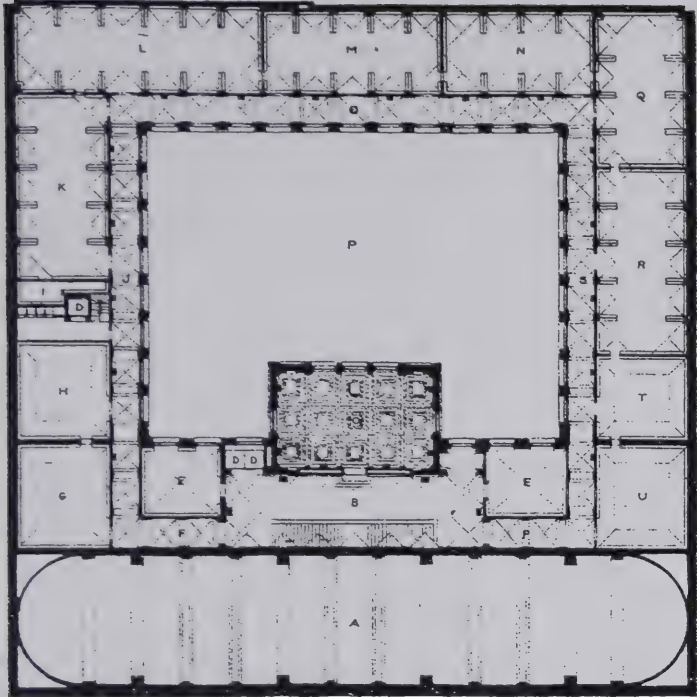


1959

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
PLAN OF ENTRESOL B & STACK NO. 6

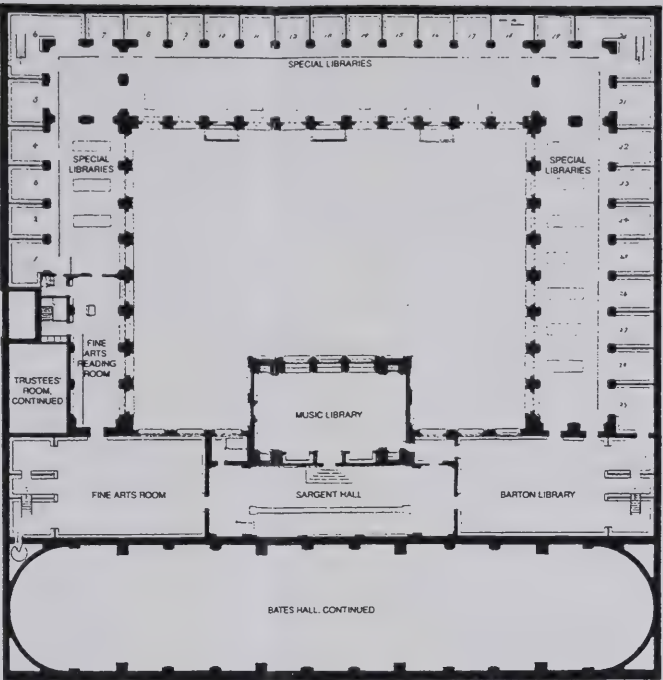
Special Library Floor

N→



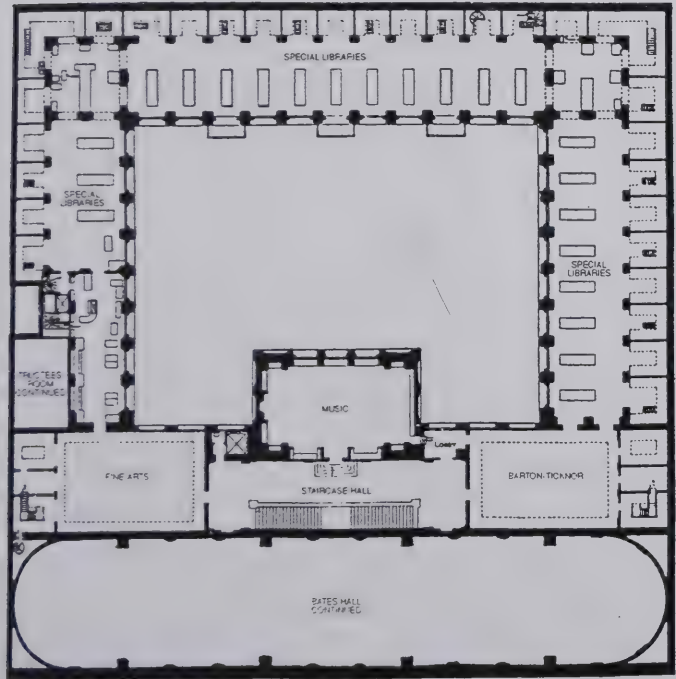
Heliotype

- PLAN OF SPECIAL LIBRARY FLOOR
- A. READING ROOM CONTINUED
 - B. MUSIC LIBRARY 30' x 40'
 - C. FINE ARTS LIBRARY 20' x 30'
 - D. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - E. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - F. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - G. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - H. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - I. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - J. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - K. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - L. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - M. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - N. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - O. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - P. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - Q. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - R. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - S. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - T. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'
 - U. EAST GALLERY 10' x 20'



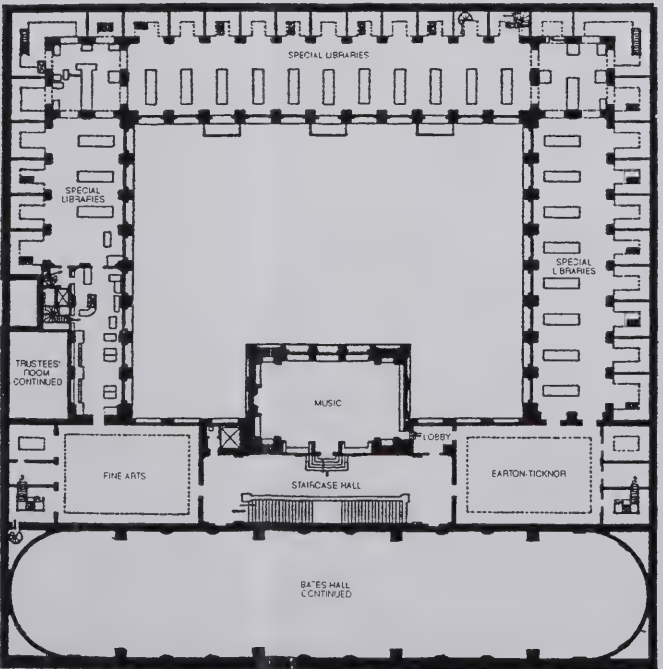
1895

CENTRAL LIBRARY, SPECIAL LIBRARIES



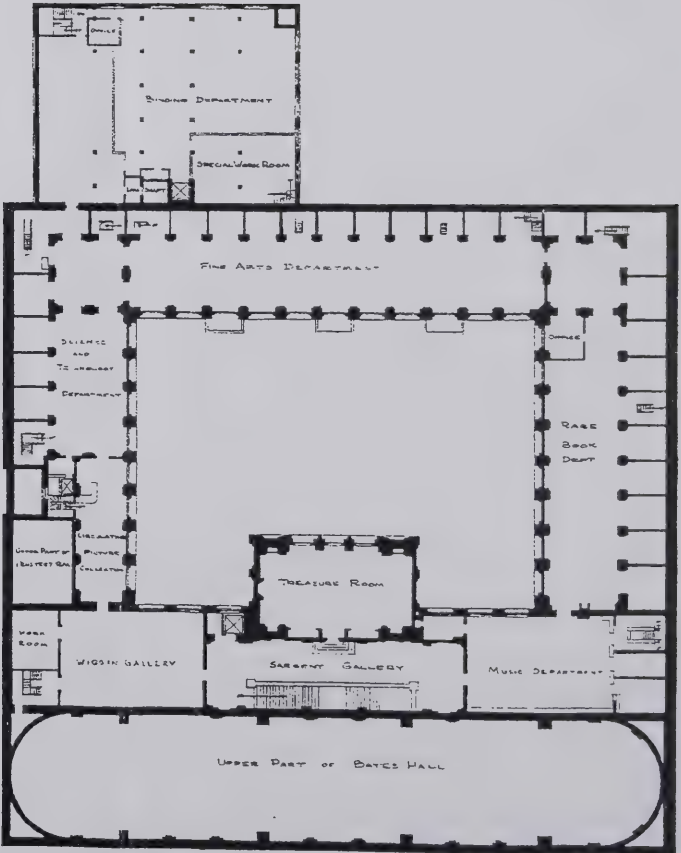
1898

CENTRAL LIBRARY, SPECIAL LIBRARIES FLOOR



1908

CENTRAL LIBRARY, SPECIAL LIBRARIES FLOOR



1959

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
PLAN OF SPECIAL LIBRARY FLOOR

SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

7.2 EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDING

7.2.1 Introduction

The exterior of the McKim Building has been both criticized and praised for its classical simplicity. At the opening of the library, Mrs. M.G. Van Rensselaer wrote about these mixed reactions and summarized them as follows. Of the critics she said:

It was called cold, uninteresting, severe, unsympathetic, monotonous, and conventional. The tower of Trinity, beautiful, but in a very different way; the showy taller tower of the “new Old South Church”; and the gaudy front of the Art Museum, but not beautiful at all, but only gaudy—these also faced on Copley Square, and in the eyes of ignorant observers they seemed to reproach the library for its cold neglect of the rich resources of architectural form and color, and for its reticent refusal to declaim about the millions of money it had cost.⁷⁹

Of the admirers she said:

They praised its dignified simplicity, its symmetrical serenity, its classic calmness and repose, the harmony of its features and proportions, the excellence of its materials and their treatment, the charm of its very pale gray tone relieved by the strong yet not aggressive red tone of the roof, the delicate vigor and good taste of its decorative details, and the noble result of all of these—the stately yet reserved and quiet expression of the building as a whole, admirably appropriate to its name and purpose.⁸⁰

Though received with mixed emotions when it was first built, the exterior of the Boston Public Library has withstood the test of time and in the 20th century has become an architectural landmark in the City of Boston. (See Figures E-27 to E-35 in Appendix 11.1.1 for a chronological photographic survey of the building).

7.2.2 Library as Completed in 1895

7.2.2.1 Foundation

The foundation for the Boston Public Library is built upon wooden pilings. The specifications for the pilings state the following:

The work to be done in strict accordance with the Piling Plans, and the piles are to be all of sound spruce, perfectly straight, of even growth, free from shakes, bad knots, or other defects, and driven vertically from 10 to 12 inches into blue clay, as may be directed, the length of piles to vary according to location; the contractor will be required to make soundings, and find blue clay or other good bottom in all cases to the satisfaction of the architects.⁸¹

The foundation is constructed of cut granite. An entry in the specifications suggests that some of the granite from the Vinal foundations may have been reused in the McKim foundations. The specification states:

Remove all existing stone foundation walls which in any way interfere with the construction of the buildings as shown by the drawings. The contractor at his option to use any or all of such stone, or any of the stone, in existing work which is not designed to be built upon, provided such stone be found to comply fully with that hereinafter specified for foundation.⁸²

The foundation was constructed by laying granite levelers between the stone piers. The granite block was then built up in horizontal courses of “good bed” laid with slate chips and Portland cement mortar. The Portland cement specified was to be “White’s imported English or LaFarge French”; the mix was to be “one of cement to two of sand.” At the grade line, the foundations were treated with a damp course of 1/2 inch of bitumen. The outer foundation wall was to be built up to the line of the granite seats and watertable.⁸³

7.2.2.2 Exterior Walls

The exterior walls of the library are faced with Milford granite, except the west wall, which is constructed of brick. The choice of a single stone facing material, with the exception of the carved panels over the entry doors, creates a monochromatic appearance. The specifications called for Milford granite to be used for the

...open court in centre of building [this was later changed to yellow brick with granite trim], the walls of drive-way, all panels, tablets, stone architraves, string, sill and belt courses, water tabling, thresholds for all doorways, openways opening into streets and court, all sills, lintels, and stone mullions, where so indicated, all wheel-stones at entrances, together with any other moulded, cut or carved stone surfaces on the exterior court...⁸⁴

The granite ashlar was laid in “8-inch and 12-inch thick courses, and no headed joints [were to] show less than 16 inches.” The ashlar surface has a dabbled finish.⁸⁵

The exterior walls of the library rise from a granite platform that surrounds the Library on three sides—Boylston Street, Dartmouth Street and Blagden Street. The platform was designed to raise the Library above Copley Square and make its height more compatible with the surrounding buildings. On the Boylston Street elevation, the platform is three steps high; on the Dartmouth Street elevation, it is three steps high at its sides and six steps high at the center entrance; and on Blagden Street it is not stepped, but rather forms a platform along the façade. There is a metal railing along the Blagden Street platform. On Dartmouth and Boylston Streets there are granite posts spaced along the sidewalk. The tops of the posts are carved with low-relief eagles, a design which was taken from the staircase at the Piazza di Spagna in Rome. Granite posts of decreasing size also lined the carriage entrance on Boylston Street (fig. E-40). On Dartmouth Street, the

sidewalk projected into the street at the library entrance. The sidewalk was paved with brick, laid in a herringbone pattern (fig. E-36).

Located on the platform, on either side of the Dartmouth Street elevation in 1895 were two granite pedestals awaiting the sculptures of Augustus St. Gaudens. Unfortunately, Augustus St. Gaudens died before these sculptures were completed.⁸⁶ Small said the following about the St. Gaudens sculptures:

The design of these groups [sculptures] is not yet definitely settled, but it is probable that they will be disposed in the following manner: on one side a single male figure representing Law, flanked by two female figures representing Power and Religion; on the other side a male figure representing Labor, flanked by two female figures representing Art and Science. All the figures are to be seated, and of heroic size; that is, if standing they would be about nine feet high.⁸⁷

Whitehill further described St. Gaudens' decade long effort to produce these sculptures:

Although Saint-Gaudens held the groups of figures for the main entrance more at heart than any other work he had undertaken, he was never able to complete them. His first plan was for a male personification of Labor, between female figures signifying Science and Art on one pedestal, with a male likeness of Law between female Religion and Force (or Power) on the other. He went about his commission so conscientiously as to set up painted reproductions of the figures in front of the library facade to determine the scale. Eventually the design changed to Law, flanked respectively by Executive Power and by two figures personifying Love for one pedestal, with the other devoted to Science, with Labor and Art (in the guise of Music) as the subsidiary figures.⁸⁸ (fig. E-37)

The early drawings for the Dartmouth Street elevation also show Corinthian columns at the corners of the platforms (fig. D-1). These columns appear to have been deleted during construction, perhaps when the columns at the entrance were eliminated from McKim's final design.

On the east (Dartmouth Street), north (Boylston Street), and south (Blagden Street) elevations of the Library, the granite walls are constructed with three stone finishes that are separated by projecting granite beltcourses. Reading from the platform up, the first portion of the wall is constructed with large granite block, laid flush, with a narrow mortar joint. The granite benches are located in front of this section of the wall on the east and north elevations. The basement windows of the library are located under the granite benches. The windows originally contained glazed sash and were covered with iron grilles. (The glazed sash have been replaced with slabs of granite.) The granite walls are constructed with this type of block up to the height of the underside of the sills of the first story windows. This portion of the wall is separated from the window sills by two projecting granite beltcourses.

The portion of the granite walls that surround the first story windows is rusticated. Each granite block has a projecting panel, with recessed sides to create the rustication. The rusticated portion of the walls is separated from the arcade by a granite beltcourse. The lower band of the beltcourse contains a Greek key. The band above the Greek key is uncarved. Above the center entrance on the Dartmouth Street side this band bears the inscription, “Free to All,” in raised carved granite letters (fig. E-39). The upper band of the cornice is molded and forms the bottom sill of the arched window openings. The granite block surrounding the arcade is laid flush and has a narrow mortar joint.

The stone ornament on the east and north elevations occurs primarily at the arcade level. Noted exceptions are the arched stone entrances on Dartmouth and Boylston Streets. On Dartmouth Street, the tops of the arched openings (above the springposts) are framed with tripartite granite casings. The outer edge of the casing is framed with an egg-and-dart molding and the two inner panels of the casing are separated by a bead-and-reel and foliate molding. The keystone of the center arch is formed with a carved helmeted head of the Roman Minerva, the work of Augustus St. Gaudens and Domingo Mora (figs. E-38, E-39). The keystones of the side arches are constructed with ornately carved scrolls. The soffits of the arches have a double row of coffers, with carved rosettes at their center.

The arched openings of the Boylston Street entrance and carriage-way have the same carved stone casing as the Dartmouth Street entrance. The keystones of the Dartmouth Street arches, however, are smaller and have only a simple carved diamond pattern. The soffits of these arches have a double row of coffers, with carved rosettes at their center (fig. E-40).

At the arcade level, there is a profusion of subtle granite ornamentation that proclaims the mission of the library, pays tribute to the scholars of history, and commemorates the trademarks of the early printers and booksellers. There are also three commemorative seals above the arches of the Dartmouth Street entrance (fig. E-38)

The three seals are located in the lower portion of the arched openings that form the second story arcade. They are sculpted of pink Knoxville, Tennessee marble and commemorate the Library, the City of Boston, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The seal of the Library was designed by Kenyon Cox and executed by Augustus St. Gaudens. The seal consists of two nude boys, holding torches and supporting a shield containing an open book. It also contains the dates, in Roman numerals, of the founding of the Library and the incorporation of the Board of Trustees—1852–1878. Above the shield is the motto “Omnium Lux Civium” — “The Light of All the People.” To the left of the Seal of the Library is the Seal of Massachusetts, which contains the figure of an Indian. The seal is flanked by a pair of dolphins. Above the seal is the motto “Euse Petit Placidam sub Libertate Quietem” — “By the sword we seek peace, but peace only under

liberty.” To the right of the Seal of the Library is the Seal of the City, containing view of Boston from the harbor, with the State House at its center. Above the seal is the motto “Sicut Patribus Sit Deus Nobis” — “May God be with our leaders.” Both the Seal of the City and the Seal of Massachusetts were carved by Augustus St. Gaudens.

The lower portion of the other arched openings of the arcade are filled with stone tablets inscribed with the names of the great writers, scientists and artists of history, as well as American statesmen. A full list of the names is included in Appendix 11.8 of this report on page 8 of Herbert Small’s *Handbook for the Boston Public Library*, 1895. There are two interesting points about the inscriptions—the first is that McKim Mead and White tried to include their names in the list by creating them in an acrostic:

Moses	Mozart	Wren
Cicero	Euclid	Herrick
Kalidasa	Aeschylus	Irving
Isocrates	Dante	Titian
Milton		Erasmus

The *Boston Evening Record* vehemently objected to the architects including their names on the building. Walter Muir Whitehill stated that “The Trustees took the matter as a harmless joke that it was, but the *Record* magnified it out of all proportion,” stating “The Public Library will have that architect’s adv. wiped off, or *The Record* will find out why.”¹⁸⁹ Unfortunately, the Trustees eventually gave in to the pressure and had the acrostic removed. Today, it only seems fitting that McKim should have signed one of his greatest buildings.

The other point of interest in the inscriptions is that four names, Rabelais, Aristophanes, Whitney and Maury, are accidentally repeated.

The springposts of the arches are formed by tripartite projecting moldings. The bottom molding is framed by a bead and contains carved foliate motifs. Above this molding is an egg-and-dart band, with a simple fascia and projecting fillet. This series of moldings also trims the corner of the building.

The underside of the arches on the Dartmouth Street elevation have carved coffers with rosettes; on the Boylston and Blagden Street elevations, the arched openings are shallower and uncarved.

In the spandrels of the window arches are carved medallions commemorating the early booksellers and printers. The medallions, carved by the sculptor Domingo Mora, represent the trademarks of sixteenth century booksellers and printers. Mora obtained

his designs for the medallions from crude wood-cut prints. There are thirty three medallions total. Originally, it was thought that more medallions might be used to ornament the building, and fifty models were made. These models included the seals of various American and European universities. Ultimately it was decided to limit the design of the medallions to the printers and booksellers trademarks. Illustrations of the medallions, with their identification, are included in Appendix 11.8.

Above the arcade is a narrow frieze, on which the mission of the Library is inscribed for all to read. On Dartmouth Street the inscription reads, "THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE CITY OF BOSTON. BUILT BY THE PEOPLE AND DEDICATED TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING A.D. MDCCCLXXXVIII." On Boylston Street the inscription reads, "THE COMMONWEALTH REQUIRES THE EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE AS THE SAFEGUARD OF ORDER AND LIBERTY." On Blagden Street the inscription reads, "MDCCCLII. FOUNDED THROUGH THE MUNIFICENCE AND PUBLIC SPIRIT OF THE CITIZENS."

Above the frieze is the granite cornice. It consists of dentil and egg-and-dart courses, with a crowning cyma recta molding ornamented with carved lions (fig. E-41).

On Blagden Street, the granite block and trim change at the beginning of the stacks. All of the block above the basement level is flush block of similar size. This section of the building is devoid of carved granite trim.

The rear (west) wall of the building was originally intended to be constructed of granite. However, because the Library was unable to purchase sufficient property on this side of the building to prevent this from being a party wall, the wall was instead constructed of brick and minimally trimmed with granite. The brick wall was less expensive to construct and was also deemed more easily altered for future Library expansion. The construction of this wall in the specifications for the building read as follows:

The facing of rear wall of building, except cornice, sills, returns, and quoins is to be of spotted Perth Amboy brick 2" x 4" x 14," to exactly match facing built under previous contract, to be bonded with a row of headers every sixth course, and laid with a three-eighths (3/8") inch horizontal joint, vertical joints to be as close as possible.⁹⁰

On the rear wall of the building, quoins and sills, returns of cornice, and all other parts as shown on drawings shall be Milford pink granite.⁹¹

The main cornice on the rear of the building is to be of terra cotta carefully worked out from the full size drawings and jointed, bonded and set as shown and directed.⁹²

There is one McKim elevation drawing for the rear wall (fig. D-4). Since no photographs have been found of this wall, it is not known how accurately this drawing reflects the wall

as built. One photograph of the north corner of this wall shows its brick wall, granite trim and bronze and terra cotta cheneau (fig. E-42).

In 1916, three townhouses along Blagden Street were demolished, and an addition was built onto the south end of the west elevation in 1918. In 1968, the 1918 addition was demolished to make room for the Johnson Building, erected in 1972. The Johnson Building completely covers the west wall of the McKim Building, obliterating any surviving evidence of the original west wall of the McKim building (figs E-54 to E-57).

7.2.2.3 Windows

The McKim Building has a variety of windows. On the north (Boylston Street) and east (Dartmouth Street) elevations, there are three types of windows. On the first floor, there are the single pane, rectangular pivoting wood sash windows. The arcade windows of the second and third floors are large arched windows with wooden grilles that divide the square sections of the sash into eight triangular panes of glass. Herbert Small describes these windows as follows: “All are filled with wooden grilles of the conventional Roman pattern, painted green—a substitute for the originally intended bronze.”⁹³ The lower center section of this window sash is operable. It is hinged to open into the building. The remaining sash is fixed. Single-sash small windows are located under the large arched windows, and framed by the inscribed stone tablets, are single sash small windows. They are rectangular in shape and hinged on the side. The specifications for the library windows state:

CARPENTER WORK.

122. All glass must be of the best quality and free from defects. Each glass must be of the full size for the opening in the sash or frame, and all must be properly bedded, stopped, sprigged, back puttied, and left whole and clean on completion of work.

GLAZING.

123. Glaze all exterior windows, including those of court (but excepting cellar windows), with best French plate glass. Glaze all cellar windows with double thick German cylinder glass. All the large windows, above Bates Hall floor level on the three principal facades are to have two thickness of glass with air space between.

124. The frames and sashes of all the windows are to be of soft, clear, dry, white pine, painted in two coats of colors directed, and made, hinged and hung according to general and detailed drawings.⁹⁴

The arcade windows (the thirty windows that form the arcade along Boylston, Dartmouth and Blagden Streets) are not all full windows. Only fifteen of the arched openings contain windows—the thirteen on Dartmouth Street and the first two on Blagden Street

at the Dartmouth Street end. The other arched openings are filled with Levanto marble, behind their wood grilles, to form smaller window openings. While this window treatment enables the large opening to be reduced to smaller windows, it does have a significant aesthetic impact on the window openings. C. Howard Walker writing at the time of the opening of the Library in 1895, stated:

The dark spaces thus obtained (the arched openings filled with Levanto marble) are covered with dark grilles, similar to those in the reading-room windows. The effect of large openings at the ends is thus gained, but the method seems unsatisfactory as evading the problem rather than solving it.⁹⁵

Consideration was also given to altering this window infill during the construction of the Library. In the October 18, 1892, specifications for the building, the Levanto marble was to be removed and the openings filled in with Milford granite.

88. Take down the Levanto marble slabs on Blagden and Boylston Sts. façades, cut out the brick backing and replace the marble with Milford granite, finished like the rest of the building. Granite slabs to be 6 inches thick, jointed as shown and directed and to be backed with 4 inches of brick or porous terra cotta.⁹⁶

A hand written revision at the end of the specification stated:

90. The contractor agrees that if the Trustees decide to omit the work described in clause 88 he will allow and deduct the sum of forty-one hundred dollars.⁹⁷

As this statement suggests, it is likely this work was not undertaken because of cost considerations.

The Blagden Street fenestration has some similarities to the Dartmouth and Boylston Street elevations, primarily in the arcade at the east end of the building. The first story windows below the arcade, however, are different on Blagden Street. Instead of a single rectangular window centered on each arch, there are two pairs of windows under each arched opening. The two pairs of windows reflects the interior two story plan, including the Ground Floor and Entresol A, along this side of the building. On the west side of the Blagden Street entrance, there are wood frame pivot windows at each of the six stack levels.

Nothing is known about the original fenestration of the west elevation of the McKim Building, other than the windows shown on the one drawing. It seems likely that they were the same pivot windows that were used for the stacks on the south (Blagden Street) elevation of the building.

7.2.2.4 Doors

The main entrance to the McKim Building is from Boylston Street. It is a triple arched entry. The entrances are filled with elaborate wrought iron gates. On each side of the arched opening, there are elaborate five-light lamps—"wrought iron work hand forged and hammered" (figs. E-43, E-44).⁹⁸

The entry vestibule—floors, walls and ceiling—are finished with pink Knoxville marble; the floor is inlaid with patterns of brown Knoxville and Levanto marble. The three doors leading from the vestibule into the Entrance Hall are framed with carved stone in foliate patterns. The door frames are arches, to fill the curve of the vaulted ceiling. The arches are filled with circular openings that frame a pedestal (fig. I-4).

The entry doors are pairs of bronze doors, designed by Daniel Chester French (figs. I-1 to I-3). The bronze doors were not completed at the time of the opening of the library so temporary wood doors were installed from 1895 until 1904.

An advertisement by Copley Prints for reproductions of the doors (copyright 1905) described them in detail:

The three double doors of bronze at the entrance to the Library are by Daniel C. French. Over each figure, on a classic tablet wreathed with garlands of flower and leaf, stands the idea which the allegorical figure represents. An appropriate legend is cut beneath each figure.

Beginning at the left, the first pair of doors represents Music and Poetry. Music has a lyre at her left side, and holds the plectron high in her right hand, as if in ecstasy of meditation before touching the strings. The legend beneath is, "Such sweet compulsion does in Music lie to lull the daughters of necessity and keep unsteady nature to her law." Poetry, also in evident meditation, holds an antique double lamp in her right hand, her left hand being raised, as if towards the stars. The legend beneath is, "True Poetry is like the loadstone, which both attracts the needle and supplies it with magnetic power."

Knowledge and Wisdom are represented in the middle pair of doors. Knowledge holds a ponderous volume on his left shoulder and in his right hand a globe. The legend beneath is, "By knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches." Wisdom holds in her right hand the staff of Hermes and in her left hand a covered goblet. The robe of Wisdom has beautifully arranged embroidery in scroll-work with anthemions and with the significant first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The legend beneath is, "There is in Wisdom a spirit subtil, clear in utterance, loving what is good, pure, steadfast."

Truth and Romance are the inspiration of the doors to the right. Truth holds in her right the traditional mirror, and in her left a globe. The legend beneath is, "Truth is the strength and the kingdom and the power and the majesty of all ages." Romance holds the dramatic mask, and in her left hand a sword and crown. The legend beneath is, "A Romance to redo and drive the night away, for me thought it better play than either at chesse or tables."⁹⁹

The Boylston Street entrance, originally designed as a *porte cochere*, was one of the most short-lived parts of McKim's original design. In 1898, only three years after the library opened, this entrance was closed in to enlarge the Periodical Room. Fortunately, there are several good photographs of the Boylston Street *porte cochere*, as well as McKim's drawings for the wrought iron gates and lamps (figs. E-40, E-45 and E-46). Herbert Small also described the Boylston Street entrance in detail in his 1895 Library Handbook:

The entrance from Boylston Street is especially beautiful and through it one may obtain a charming glimpse into the Interior Court. It is composed of three arches, designed and ornamented like those of the main entrance, but much less elaborately (the sunken panels of the soffits, for example, being without rosettes) and like them is closed with wrought-iron gates, above which depend handsome wrought-iron lanterns. This entrance is intended chiefly as a *porte cochere*, although to the right there is a door admitting to the bindery and printing-office, as well as to the Newspaper Reading Room and the Patent Room upstairs, and through the Patent Room, indeed, to the main portion of the building. The arches to the left carry the driveway into a small paved yard, with high granite walls and a handsome plaster ceiling, extending through to the court proper, from which it is separated by two arches closed with frames of glass. The driveway is guarded at the corners of the platform by two large pedestals, richly ornamented with carving, and surmounted by globes sculptured with eagles.¹⁰⁰

McKim's specifications for the Boylston Street door (presumably the door into the bindery and printing office) were as follows: "Street doors on Boylston Street entrance to be of English oak, with mouldings, as described for Bates Hall door."¹⁰¹ The Bates Hall Door is described as "English Oak, 3" thick, paneled, constructed over pine core, as described above, with raised and moulded panels, having three carved members to each moulding."¹⁰² The existing door at Boylston Street fits this description.

The Blagden Street entrance is a single, recessed, rectangular opening. The opening is framed with a simple granite casing and a slightly projecting granite hood. There are single light, wrought iron lamps on both sides of the entrance (figs. E-30 and E-47).

There are no historic photographs that show the original Blagden Street entry doors. The existing doors are double doors, with a transom light above. Each door has three panels and the uppermost panel is glazed. It is possible that these are the original Blagden Street doors.

7.2.2.5 Roof

In the November 1894 *Peterson Magazine*, Elmer Garnsey described the new Library and stated the following about the roof, "The roof is simply a roof; it is covered with a quiet colored tile and enriched at the top by a copper cresting, which softens the sky-line without breaking it."¹⁰³

Considering the attention to detail found in the specifications for the roof and the problems that have plagued the roof since its construction, this is a particularly understated description.

The main roof of the McKim building consists of two distinct parts, the sloping sides of the roof and the flat deck at its top (fig. D-6). The specification described the construction of the roof as follows:

21. The entire roof the Building proper (except flat deck on top) is to be covered with hard-burned, *glazed* clay tiles, of Roman pattern, of same form and size, and fully equal, in hardness and other qualities. .. The tiles and the glaze are to be of the color and texture which the Trustees select. The tiles are to be 15.5 inches long, 13 inches wide, and 3/8 of an inch thick, and are to have two countersunk holes at upper end, and two grooved lugs cast on at upper end or under side. Each hook must rise from a tapered shoulder, so that bearing of tiles will be on shoulders only.

The above tiles are to be put directly upon angle irons, without any sheathing or fireproof material beneath. The angle irons are to run horizontally, and the tiles are to be hooked to them, the groove in the lug receiving one-half inch of the flange of the angle iron. Each tile must in addition be fastened on by No. 9 copper wire, run through countersunk holes, passed round the angle iron, and secured by neatly twisting the ends together...

22. The flat deck is to have a slight pitch both ways formed in the iron construction, and this construction will consist of tee irons 2" x 2" x 5/16", twelve inches apart, and running horizontally. The contractor is to lay down on flanges, between webs of tee irons, wire netting, 1.5" mesh, No. 13 wire, and then to cover netting with canvas. Upon the canvas there shall be spread a body of elastic water proof Portland cement concrete, the upper surface of which shall be not more than one-fourth of an inch below top of web of tee irons...

The entire flat deck shall be covered with hard-burned glazed clay tiles, fully equal in quality to tiles for slopes of roof. These tiles are to be flat, about twelve inches long, six inches wide and one inch thick. They shall have double grooves top and bottom, grooves at the side, channels on both sides following pitch of roof, and shall be in form like model to be seen at the office of the Architects. These tiles shall be laid in a full body of Portland cement upon the concrete described above, and the joints raked out and pointed with elastic putty warranted not to run under the heat of the sun. Color and texture as selected by Trustees.¹⁰⁴

Herbert Small described the color of the roof tile as “purple—showing dark brown in the full sunlight.”¹⁰⁵

The main roof of the library has a copper gutter built into the cheneau. The cheneau has an elaborate pattern of dolphin and shell motifs (fig. E-42). McKim’s specifications for the cheneau on the main building call for it to be bronze; however, all of the early descriptions of the building refer to it as copper, and it appears that the existing copper cheneau is original to the building. It is interesting to note in the 1950 photograph of the library, that even with all the roof tile removed the cheneau on the main roof remains in

place (fig. E-34). The gutters from the main roof run into conductor pipes that run inside the building.

The McKim specifications for the gutters read as follows:

28. Furnish and build in gutter of pure 18-ounce copper on whole of main, and court cornices. On cornices for sloping bed for gutter of plaster of Paris mixed with sawdust, making it perfectly smooth on top, and covering it with two coats of shellac. Form slope to turn water to conductors in bottom of copper gutter. The gutter is to run up on the roof to second course of tiles, and to be turned securely over angle iron. On the other side, it is to be built into cheneau,—into terra-cotta cheneau of court and rear by means of a slot, and into bronze cheneau of main cornice by means of a strip of iron put on with screws, joint to be well filled with elastic putty. Copper of gutter to be in widths of not over three feet, and seams to be made with 1-4" copper rivets not over 3" apart, and then soldered, or other method may be directed by Trustees.

Every three feet around whole of cornices fasten cheneau to iron construction by means of a heavy copper wire, not less than 3-16" diameter, run through slot in eave tile.

Build in cast brass strainer to all outlets of gutters.

Connect outlets with conductor pipes inside building with all necessary stays, bends, leaded joints, etc. with heavy cast brass 6" pipe, run about seven feet through cornice, and continue it by heavy 6" galvanized wrought iron pipe to conductors, staying it securely to wall, giving it as much pitch as possible, and connection to conductor with joint caulked with oakum and run with lead. Connect to brass pipe by flanges, with screw threads, bolts and nuts.¹⁰⁶

The cheneau on the west elevation of the building was terra cotta. (All evidence of this cheneau was obliterated when the Johnson Building was built.) In the specification for the building it was described as follows:

67. Terra cotta cheneau is to be furnished and set on west front of building, to be modelled exactly like bronze cheneau on the rest of the building ... copper gutter to be formed, locked, and back soldered and to be turned into raggle of cheneau ... All joints in terra cotta to be carefully pointed, and no misshaped pieces to be used. Color and texture is to match the terra cotta cornice on the building.¹⁰⁷

The ridge of the tile roof on the main building was trimmed with a copper cresting that repeated the shell motifs of the cheneau. Copper finials trimmed the corners of the roof. The ridge of the roof was also trimmed with green roof tiles. On the street sides of the roof, there were six courses of green tile and on the courtyard side of the roof there was one course of green tile.

The original library roof also had six skylights and two scuttles in the flat roof (over Sargent Hall) There were also five chimneys located in this roof and a large ventilator. There was an additional chimney in the south portion of the roof that served the fireplace

in the Trustees' Room and there were two other skylights, located in the northwest and southwest corners of the two sloping portions of the tile roof on the interior court side.

The specifications for the skylights and scuttles stated:

29. Build skylights on flat deck as shown on drawings Glass to be 1-2" thick, to be set on rubber in a sash formed of angle and tee irons. Under skylights furnish and build copper gutters so as to take and HOLD water condensed on under side of glass. Securely fasten heavy iron wire netting under side of glass.

Build two scuttles of copper in light iron frames in flat deck, with hinges and fastenings complete.

Skylight on court slope to be built of glass tiles to match clay tiles, and laid in the latter in continuous courses.¹⁰⁸

The specifications for the chimneys state, "73. Chimneys from one foot below roof are to be built of Perth Amboy brick, to match as near as possible the color of the roof tiles."¹⁰⁹

7.2.2.6 Interior Court

McKim's design for the Library was based upon an interior court, enclosed by the building's public spaces and book stacks. The interior court provided a means of bringing light to the inner spaces of the building, particularly the stacks, and it created a tranquil outdoor space where patrons could escape from the noise of the Boston streets.

The interior court was one of the novel features of the new Library building and it was written about extensively at the time of the Library's opening. The following are excerpts from contemporary writings that reveal the public's reaction to the interior court.

The article about the Library on its opening day, in the *Boston Daily Globe*, February 1, 1895, says the following about the interior court:

[Boylston Street side of the building] A door opens into the courtyard about which so much has been written and about which so many have gone into ecstasies. It is fully worthy of all the hysterical appreciation that has been bestowed on it.

A glance towards the right just on entering the cloister shows the Boylston St. entrance and reveals a glimpse of the New Old South Church. In the center of the courtyard is the fountain which will lend animation to the scene in summer. Standing against the further wall are the massive Italian flower pots which visitors to the World's fair will remember as distinctive of the New York state building. It is the ultimate plan to fill these with decorative trees and set them about the courtyard.¹¹⁰

Mrs. M. G. Van Rensselaer writes the following about the courtyard:

It [the courtyard] is encircled on three sides by graceful columnar arcades of marble, above which rise walls of yellowish brick, delightfully warm and rich in tone; and with its spacious air of dignified retirement, it is admirably expressive as a feature in a place which will be frequented by the public for other than practical business purposes, yet not for purposes of trivial pleasure. Coming immediately upon it from a raw prosaic American street [Boylston Street] our surprise makes but the more impressive and seductively poetic the pure and simple beauty of its shadowy arcades, the solid nobility of its upper walls, the peacefulness of its sunny central area of turf, and its pervading atmosphere is carefully considered art and cloistered quietude. Seats will be provided beneath its arcades and, under protecting awnings, also upon their roofs, and during the long warm months of the year it will be a place without a parallel as yet on American soil—a place owned by the public of a great city, where hours or even moments of repose or study will be doubly fruitful, feeding the most careless or unconscious eye with the food of high artistic loveliness.¹¹¹

McKim's design for the interior court is derived from the arcade of the Cancelleria Palace in Rome (figs. D-7, D-8). William Jordy described this design source as follows:

For the court, he [McKim] returned to the Cancelleria, literally reproducing its arcade, although the arcade lost much of the lithe attenuation of the original in its cruder carving and what appear to be its squatter proportions. [Jordy inserts the following note: In his original scheme, McKim used the Cancelleria as his source of inspiration, but with piers (instead of columned) arches for the ground arcade, and with a double tier of arcuation applied to the wall above. The total effect recalled the Colosseum as well as the Cancelleria. Had the ingenious crossing of the two monuments of this scheme been realized, the court would have been more unified than it is.] Actually, the arcades are exactly the same height as those on the ground story of the Cancelleria, but the space between the columns (the intercolumniation) is wider. The feeling of greater horizontality resulting from this spacing, together with the gentler rise of the arching, account for the squatter appearance. The projection of the staircase into the courtyard compromises the pristine rectangularity of the prototype.¹¹²

Unlike the outer (street elevation) walls of the McKim building which are constructed of a single stone—Milford granite—the walls and trim of the interior court are constructed of a variety of masonry materials—marble, brick, terra cotta, bluestone and granite. The varied masonry materials, combined with the articulation of the walls by the arcade and the projection of the grand stair and its balcony, make the interior courtyard an informal and intimate space. This sense of scale and intimacy is in marked contrast to the formal and austere feeling of the street elevations of the Library (figs. E-48 and E-49).

McKim's original specifications for the interior court walls called for them to be granite.

Granite. All exterior stone facings of walls of building, those of the open court in centre of building ... to be of Milford or other approved granite of equal quality, approved by the said trustees.

Court. All ashlar under portico to be fair axed, that above portico to have dabbled face.¹¹³

By 1889, the specifications for the interior court walls had been changed. The walls under the portico were to be constructed with granite and the walls above the portico with Perth Amboy brick.

47. In the court, the whole arcade including its cornice, floor, and base course, the main cornice, keystones of arched windows, caps, sills, string courses, floors and brackets of balconies, panels under balconies, balustrade around balcony on east side, paving of arcade, and everything not otherwise shown shall be of Milford pink granite.¹¹⁴

70. The facing of all court walls, except string courses, key-stones, caps, sills, panels, balconies, and all other parts indicated of other material on drawings, to be of Perth Amboy brick, 1 1/2" x 4" x 12" light buff in color, not speckled, and to conform to the sample approved by the Trustees. To be laid with one-half (1/2") inch horizontal joint, vertical joints to be as close as possible.¹¹⁵ [Note: The rear wall of the McKim building was also Perth Amboy brick, but it was a larger brick and spotted.]

The construction materials for the arcade were changed one additional time. Instead of being constructed with Milford granite, Tuckahoe, New York marble was used for the columns and Georgia marble for the cornice and paving.

The floor of the arcade was constructed with red brick and framed with white marble. The brick is laid in a herring bone pattern. Some of the construction drawings for the paving show the herring bone pattern broken up by patterns of brick laid in squares and rectangles, however, these patterns were never executed.

The columns of the arcade are simple Doric columns. Their shafts have no fluting. The columns support arched marble openings. Between the spandrels are carved marble rosettes. The parapet of the arcade is constructed with marble panels, with projecting marble piers. The parapet is separated from the arcade by a simple projecting cornice.

The arcade has a vaulted, plastered ceiling. Originally, it had an electrical conduit that ran down the center of the ceiling, with single light bulbs for illumination (fig. E-50).

The windows in the granite wall under the arcade are wood double hung windows covered with iron grilles.

The early McKim drawings for the arcade roof show it as a pitched roof, covered with tile (fig. D-9). In the 1890 roofing specification, the arcade roof was described as follows:

23. The whole of the arcade roof shall be covered with hard-burned, glazed clay tiles, fully equal to tiles already mentioned, and in shape similar to sample to be seen at the office of the Architects.¹¹⁶

During construction, the design of the arcade roof was changed to create a balcony around the three sides of the courtyard. Access to the balcony was provided by two doors

in the east wall of the Bates Hall level of the building. None of the surviving specifications for the building document this construction change. The November Peterson Magazine article describing the Library stated the following about the arcade:

The flat paved balcony above the colonnade offers another pleasant promenade and enticing reading place, the charm of which must be experienced to be appreciated.¹¹⁷

The original covering for the arcade balcony roof is unknown, although apparently it was not very watertight. In 1897, only two years after the McKim Building opened to the public, the “roof of the arcade was re-laid with a coating of slate to remedy leaks.”¹¹⁸

Above the arcade, the walls of the court are constructed with yellow brick laid with a dark gray mortar. It is important to note that the use of the gray mortar was intentional and does not represent modern repointing done with a gray Portland cement. Herbert Small stated the following about the walls: “Above the arcade the walls of the court are built of unusually long yellow-gray Pompeiian bricks, with granite trimmings, the two materials being brought into a better harmony by layering the bricks in extra heavy courses of gray mortar.”¹¹⁹

The fenestration of the brick walls consists of two window types—the small single-paned, side hinged windows in the stacks and other secondary spaces of the Bates Hall level and the large multi-paned arcade windows which line the passages of the Special Library Floor. The smaller windows have casings that are constructed with terra cotta and yellow brick. The terra cotta is used for the keystones, top corners and base of the casing. The windowsills are bluestone. The October 1892 specifications for the building stated:

Windows in the court over arcade roof, not provided in former contract, are to be furnished and set. They are to be pivoted windows with Newman’s patent pivot, glazed with corrugated glass. Details to be the same as the rest of the court windows.¹²⁰

The windows described do not match the existing side hinged windows that have clear glass. It is, therefore, assumed that these windows were never installed.

The secondary rooms of the Bates Hall level are demarcated from the Special Libraries floor by a granite beltcourse. The beltcourse has a carved Greek key pattern. The beltcourse provides the base for the brick piers that form the Special Libraries floor arcade and functions as the sill for the Special Libraries windows. The Special Libraries windows are large arched wood sash. At the center of the windows is a pair of operable double hung sash. The other lights of the window are fixed, with the exception of the windows in the south elevation in the Print Department. These windows serve two floors of the library and have both the operable double hung center sash, as well as an operable semicircular upper sash. On three of the windows in the west elevation, there is a door in

the center of the sash that provides access to wrought iron balconies (fig. E-51). Under the center balcony is a clock with a circular face and a terra cotta frame.

The spandrels above the brick piers of the arcade contain terra cotta wreaths. The arched openings are constructed with brick and have granite keystone. The cornice is granite. It is constructed with a slight overhang and ornamented with granite brackets that are heavy in scale and closely placed. The roofline is trimmed with a molded copper cheneau.

The construction changes made to the arcade and its roof reveal McKim's evolving design for this space. The June 1889 specifications for the Library stated that the arcade (when it had a pitched roof, rather than a balcony) and the courtyard were to have a terra cotta cheneau.

98. Furnish and set the terra cotta cheneau in the main cornice [west elevation] and the court and arcade cornices ... The cheneau to be of approved color and carefully worked out from full size drawings; the sections are to be securely bonded together with joints in Portland cement mortar, and securely fastened to stone cornice by copper dowels and anchors, and secured to guard of wrought iron run on inner side of cheneau; the whole to be tied to the roof with copper bands as shown and directed. The cheneau of the arcade is to have a gargoyle made according to detail over every pin and the gutter of the arcade cornice is to be formed in terra cotta.¹²¹

The east wall of the interior court is unlike the other three. It has no arcade, although the arcade joins its north and south ends. At the center of the east wall is the projecting wall of the grand stair. The stair walls create two rather blind alcoves at the junctions of the arcade and the east wall. The east wall is sheathed with granite up to the height of the top of the arcade balcony. Above the height of the arcade balcony, the east wall is sheathed with brick.

At the height of the grand stair landing, there is a granite balcony. The balcony is supported by carved granite brackets and its underside has coffered panels with carved granite rosettes in their center (fig. E-21). It is surrounded by a granite balustrade. From inside the building, the balcony is reached through a pair of ornately carved oak doors from the grand stair landing. On either side of these doors is a single-paned, pivoting sash window.

Underneath the balcony was the original exterior entrance to the Library's cellar. The original cellar was a utilitarian space that housed the heating, lighting, and ventilating equipment for the building. Herbert Small described how the court played a role in ventilating the building:

The air for ventilation is drawn from the interior Court by means of an eighteen-foot fan, capable of moving forty thousand cubic feet of air a minute, and after being strained through cotton bags, to free it from dust and germs, it is diffused through ducts to the different parts of the building...¹²²

Above the balcony are two stories, with five-arch arcades. The arcades are constructed with engaged brick columns rather than the brick pilasters found on the other walls of the courtyard. The center three arches contain windows; the side arches are blind. The second story windows, which fill the three center arches in the west wall of the Grand Staircase Hall, contain a large rectangular pane of plate glass set in a fixed wooden sash. Above the rectangular sash is a single light, fixed semi-circular window. The third story windows are the same as those in the other Special Libraries windows.

The interior court was designed with a fountain at its center. The construction of the fountain and the landscaping of the courtyard was completed after the Library opened in January of 1895. Because it was part of the original construction campaign, however, it is included in this section of the report. The fountain was to be a gift to the Library from McKim as a memorial to his second wife, Julia Appleton McKim. The Library Trustees readily accepted McKim's offer and it was reported in the *Boston Transcript* on May 23, 1895 by H. T. Parker:

[McKim] chose as his especial care the fountain in the interior court, designing it in the fashion of an impluvium of a Roman House—a shallow, quadrangular basin, framed in a broad rim of marble, and reflecting in its water, as in a mirror, the surrounding walls and the open sky above. At first only a jet of water was to spout upward from the centre of the basin; but subsequently he decided to adorn the fountain with sculpture. Delays of various sorts then arose, and it was not until Mr. MacMonnies' visit, some months since, to New York, that a final decision was made. The sculptor then proffered to Mr. McKim his bronze "Bacchante and Child" and in spite of many suggestions that it remain in this city [New York], it will become the Chief part of the fountain in the court of the Boston Library.¹²³

Parker went on to describe the sculpture as follows:

The nude Bacchante is in vigorous and joyous motion, poised on the toes of her left foot, her springy weight falling altogether on her left leg, her right uplifted and her bended knee thrust forward, as, half-dancing, she pursues her way. In her left hand she raises a bunch of grapes high above her head. With her right arm bent about him as though to make a seat of her elbow, she carries a naked child, that presses its head eagerly against her throat and cheek, and gazes with wide-eyed and open mouthed eagerness at the quivering grapes.

With its vitality and gaiety, and its suggestion of the joy of life, it promises to gain by contrast with the austere dignity of its surroundings. In giving it, Mr. McKim and Mr. MacMonnies will give Boston one of the few admirable examples of imaginative sculpture in public places in America.¹²⁴ (fig. E-52)

The construction of the fountain basin proceeded as planned and the c.1895 photographs of the interior court show the fountain completed and filled with water (fig. E-49). Richard Wilson, architectural historian and McKim scholar, notes that Philip Martiny, an architectural sculptor and friend of McKim's, is reputed to have designed and built the fountain basin.

The acquisition and installation of the Bacchante, unlike the construction of the fountain basin, was plagued by controversy and delay. The controversy about the Bacchante sculpture that followed McKim's generous offer has become legendary. Since all of the artwork installed in the Library had to be reviewed and approved by the Boston Art Commission, the Commission's deliberations and vote were the first challenge faced by the sculpture. The Commission received a small scale model of the sculpture in July of 1896, and spent several months reviewing its artistic merits and appropriateness for the Library. A "Committee of Experts" was assembled, which included Augustus St. Gaudens and Daniel Chester French, to advise the Art Commission. The deliberations of the "Committee of Experts" did not produce a unanimous decision—instead they voted five to four in favor of accepting the sculpture. This was not, however, a strong enough endorsement to persuade the Art Commission that the sculpture should be accepted. The Art Commission voted four to one not to accept the Bacchante. The one dissenting vote was from F. O. Prince, a Trustee of the Library and member of the Art Commission.

Prince's support for the acceptance of the sculpture, however, was greatly compromised by his comments that the Commission had not been troubled by the artistic merit of nudity of the sculpture but that it was inappropriate to place "a monument of inebriety" in the Library.¹²⁵ With the vote of the Commission and the comments of Prince, the Boston press, which had already had a great time criticizing the construction of the Library now had the Bacchante to fuel its criticism.

In the six months that followed the vote of the Art Commission, McKim's gift of the Bacchante remained controversial in the press and among the Library Trustees. The press had a heyday commenting on the decision; out-of-town papers criticized the "Puritanism of Boston," while conservative Boston papers and religious leaders criticized the immorality and intemperance of the sculpture.¹²⁶

For the Library Trustees, the vote of the Art Commission was disturbing for several reasons. It reversed their acceptance of McKim's gift, made even more sensitive by the fact that the Bacchante was to be given as a memorial tribute to his recently deceased wife. It was also contrary to the recommendations of McKim, who had played such a critical role in selecting the other artwork for the building; Augustus St. Gaudens, America's preeminent sculptor and a major contributor to the Library's artwork; and D. C. French, who was a member of the Commission and as eminent an artist as St. Gaudens. Defying their recommendations and being subjected to criticism such as, "The depressing little incident (vote of the Art Commission regarding the Bacchante) seems to drop us back a century or two towards the dark ages," clearly placed the Trustees in a difficult position.¹²⁷

In an effort to bring some balance and objectivity to the chaos, the Trustees persuaded the Art Commission that the Bacchante should be temporarily placed in the fountain to

more accurately evaluate her appropriateness for the Library. On November 15, 1896, a private viewing was held. T. R. Sullivan described this event as follows:

This Sunday morning, McKim's gift, the rejected Bacchante, was set up in the Library court with the fountain playing about it, and the solemn Art Commission with its experts in tow assembled there for deliberate inspection. When about noon, the august enclave retired into secret session, a hundred or more invited guests were turned loose in the court for their private satisfaction, discussion and argument. The scene has its comic side, although a strong, virulent minority, finding the group inappropriate as well as indecent, conducted itself with portentous earnestness. The majority, however, including many intelligent women, thought it singularly fine and beautiful, and frankly hoped it would remain. One important fact was made clear at once. So far as scale goes, the group is in perfect harmony with the surrounding arcade. In this particular, at least, it stands as if in obedience with the laws of predestination.¹²⁸

Based upon this private viewing, the "Committee of Experts" recast its vote with seven approving and two opposing the acceptance of the Bacchante. Based upon this stronger recommendation for acceptance, the Art Commission reversed its earlier vote of rejection and accepted the gift of the Bacchante by a vote of four to one. As a result of the vote of the Art Commission, the sculpture remained on exhibit in the court for the remainder of that November. It was then removed from the fountain for the winter, during which time a permanent pedestal for the sculpture was to be built.

The arrival of the Bacchante in Boston and its public viewing unleashed a relentless campaign of moral criticism during the winter of 1896–97. The conservative clergy of the city were particularly virulent in their attacks. This unending stream of criticism ultimately led to the Art Commission and Library Trustees to request that McKim withdraw his offer of the Bacchante. On May 29, 1897, McKim acquiesced to the wishes of the Commission and Trustees and subsequently gave the Bacchante to the Metropolitan Museum in New York. The Museum accepted the gift without hesitation and prominently displayed the Bacchante, no doubt hoping to capitalize on its infamous visit to the Boston Public Library. The sculpture remains on exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum.

McKim, writing to MacMonnies on October 27, 1897, described the resolution to the debacle as follows:

After the Boston battle, in which all the decent people were arrayed on one side, and all the long haired men and short haired women, and other cranks, on the other, I asked permission to withdraw the statue from an absurd newspaper contention, and after consulting with St. Gaudens, White and others, determined to present the statue to the Metropolitan Museum, at the earnest request of one of the Trustees. The offer was accepted immediately, in terms that were most flattering to you, and the statue has become the much valued property of the Museum.

I have not heard of Dr. Heysinger, and it will matter little what he or other protestors may choose to say, but this I can assure you, that whatever their vapid utterance may be, it will not avail, or "cut any ice," as we say here in New York, with the Trustees or with the intelligent public, and I think your

fears are needless. At any rate, so far as I am concerned, your gift has passed out of my hands, and has been made over, in good faith, to the Metropolitan Museum, and been accepted by it. I do not anticipate anything in the future but an increase of the prestige of your Classic and most beautiful creation. Removed from Puritan surroundings to the Metropolis, where she belongs. I think we may regard this question of her virtue as settled for all time.¹²⁹

After the rejection of McKim's Bacchante, no other sculpture was sought for the fountain. It has remained a simple rectangular fountain, with a single jet of water that sprays up from its center. Architectural Historian, Richard Guy Wilson noted that this fountain was designed by Philip Martiny.¹³⁰

Although gone from the fountain, Boston's connection with the Bacchante did not end in 1897. Jonathan Fairbanks, in his article "MacMonnies' Bacchante: Its Trial, Condemnation and Restoration," describes its continued and haunting relationship to the City.

On or about 1901, a second and third casting from the original plaster model were made under MacMonnies' direction for the Luxembourg Gallery in Paris and for a New Yorker, Mr. Charles Tyson Yerkes. After Mr. Yerkes died in 1905, his estate went bankrupt, and his bronze was purchased at auction in New York for \$8,000 by the Boston art philanthropist George Robert White, who left it to his sister, Mrs. Harriet J. Bradbury. She bequeathed it to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1930, with the stipulation that it be kept on view in the museum. This bronze, virtually identical to the reject work dispatched to the Metropolitan Museum, has been repeatedly requested by the offices of the Boston Public Library for long-term loan to display in the library's courtyard fountain—which ironically has remained empty for 97 years. Such a loan was out of the question not only because of the stipulation of Mrs. Bradbury's bequest, but also because it would be irresponsible to display the historic bronze in the open air of the later 20th century...¹³¹

As part of the on-going restoration of the McKim Building, the Bacchante has been recast from the sculpture at the Museum of Fine Arts and will finally be placed in the court fountain as McKim intended.

In addition to the fountain, there were two other masonry features in the court. On either side of the projecting bay of the grand stair there were rectangular platforms, paved with brick and framed with white marble. Herbert Small said that these platforms were intended for statues: "One of them may be the bronze statue of Ralph Waldo Emerson which it is understood Mr. Daniel C. French, the sculptor of the bronze doors of the main entrance is to make for the Library."¹³² No documentation has been found to indicate that any statues were ever sculpted for the courtyard. The platforms themselves disappeared from the court at an unknown date, covered over by later alterations. During Phase I of the 1990s project, sections of the platforms were found below grade and they were reconstructed as part of the Phase I alterations to the basement space.

The last masonry feature in the court was an air intake vent, a rectangular structure that stood on the west side of the courtyard. It has louvered sides and a flat metal roof.

There is little documentation for the original landscaping of the interior court. Between 1891 and 1892, there is correspondence between McKim and Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. regarding the court. In a letter dated the 14th of June 1892, Olmsted requests plans and elevations from McKim “in order that we may make some plans for the treatment of the court.”¹³³ Plans at the F. L. Olmsted National Historic Site include the drawings submitted by McKim and several traces that show very preliminary studies for the courtyard. One study shows a path running along the east wall of the interior court, connecting the north and south sides of the arcade. The path appears to have been aligned with one of the entrances from the porte cochere into the interior court. The second drawing is a section of the courtyard, showing a rectangular fountain in its center, surrounded by grass (fig. D-27).

This is the level of planting in the courtyard at the time that the Library opened in 1895 and appears to represent the level of planting for the short lived stay of the Bacchante in the fountain. Herbert Small describes the landscaping of the courtyard in 1895 as follows:

In the centre of a well-kept grass plot a fountain plays every day during the warm season into a rectangular basin bordered with white marble and lined with a marble mosaic.¹³⁴

Construction photographs of the court show the fountain and platforms surrounded by grass and the terra cotta pots awaiting their plantings.¹³⁵ Small says of these pots:

Large terra-cotta pots made in Italy, and ornamented with heavy festoons, are scattered about the court—meant some day to hold bay-trees, and to be distributed in a more orderly fashion, most of them between the columns of the arcade or on the posts of the parapet.¹³⁶

Later photographs of the court show small trees planted at the edge of the arcade. There are no paths in the grass, and it continues to be space that was to be viewed and not entered. The trees have merely been inserted into the grass, with scarcely a cut out around their base (fig. E-50).

A letter found in the Olmsted archives relates to the Library’s interior court. It is from M. Sargent to the Olmsted Brothers (December 17, 1898) and is regarding a memorial fund for Harry S. Codman, whose income was to be used for buying and maintaining plants for the decoration of the courtyard of the Library. This fund, which was originally held by McKim, was turned over to the Trustees. Sargent’s letter states that the sum of the fund, only \$3,000.00, is too small to generate adequate income for the plants, and therefore he recommends that the income be used to purchase landscape-gardening books for the Library, rather than for plants for the courtyard. It is interesting to note that the

plantings considered are only to be seasonal and that permanent plantings in the courtyard are not considered.

The plan has been explained to Mr. McKim and Mr. D. H. Burnham, who have been instrumental in securing a large part of the memorial fund, and it is heartily approved by them both. and, even if the money was sufficient to carry out the plan first proposed, it seems to me that a special library of books on landscape-gardening, which is likely to be preserved for centuries, is a more valuable and lasting memorial to Harry than a collection of plants which could only be kept in the courtyard-yard during part of the year and which would, in the hands of the Library Trustees, be much more apt to be neglected than one of their special libraries.¹³⁷

Early photos also show wooden benches lining the walls of the arcade. There are no historic photographs that show any seating on the arcade balcony, though the description of the area as an “enticing reading place” suggests that it must have had benches or chairs.

All of the historic photographs show patrons only on the arcade. The early photographs do show white (probably marble) pavers that form a path from the east basement entry to the fountain (figs. E-48 and E-49). The pavers appear to have been a path for maintenance personnel to reach the fountain, rather than for patrons to enter into the courtyard. It is also interesting to note that the steps shown leading down into the courtyard in the early McKim drawings and the sketch of a path across the east side in the Olmsted drawings were never executed. These changes suggest that even though the courtyard may originally have been conceived as an accessible space, that as its design evolved it became a space that was to be viewed (from the arcade and the interior rooms of the Library) rather than entered.

7.2.3 Library Alterations to 1909

The alterations undertaken on the McKim Building from 1895 to 1908 fall into the general category of maintenance. No major changes were made to the exterior of the building.

7.2.3.1 Roof

The primary areas requiring nearly immediate repair were the Library roofs—both the arcade roof and the main roof. In 1897, only two years after the Library opened, the entire arcade roof was re-laid with a coating of slate to remedy the leaks. In 1900, the tile roof was newly cemented, the joints in the walls repointed and the courtyard walls in the basement made watertight. In 1904, the roof needed more repairs. A new perforated brass pipe was placed in the outside roof gutters for thawing ice and snow. The tile roof was thoroughly inspected; all damaged tiles were replaced or repaired, and all defective

joints were re-cemented. In 1906, the tile roof was extensively repaired (246 tiles replaced) and repairs were made to correct the leaks in the courtyard arcade.¹³⁸

7.2.3.2 Windows and Doors

A noteworthy entry in the Trustees reports indicates that the exterior wood trim was scheduled for repainting in 1907.¹³⁹ The Copley Square entrance to the Library has received few alterations since its construction. The Sir Henry Vane statue, sculpted by MacMonnies, was placed here sometime post 1902. The bronze doors, which had not been cast when the Library opened in 1895, were installed in 1904 as evidenced by the Trustees' authorization to pay French for completion on December 2, 1904.¹⁴⁰

The Boylston Street entrance was extensively altered in 1898. The two easternmost arched openings were filled in with glass and wood enclosures to create more interior space for the Library. The wrought iron gates and lamps were left in place, so that the overall configuration of the entrance was not changed significantly.

The west arched opening, which contains the double carved oak doors that provided access to the bindery and printing office was not altered as part of this work. The oak doors, which it is assumed originally had stained and resinous finish, are now painted black. Although unused, this entry remains intact.

7.2.3.3 Artwork

A bas-relief of Robert Charles Billings by Augustus St. Gaudens was purchased for the north courtyard wall in 1903; and the contract with Augustus St. Gaudens and the City, made on November 30, 1892, for groups of statuary to be placed on pedestals at the Copley Square entrance, terminated with his death in the summer of 1907.¹⁴¹

7.2.3.4 Interior Court

The plantings in the courtyard also changed over time, though documentation is scant. There is an entry in the BPL Trustees' Minutes dated May 29, 1903, under the category "American Park and Outdoor Art Association," that reads as follows:

In accordance with request of May 8, the librarian reported on the Communication of American Park and Outdoor Art Association regarding the decoration of the courtyard and in connection therewith presented as statement and drawings prepared by Manning Brothers, landscape architects, and upon motion of Dr. Dwight it was voted that the offer of the American Park and Outdoor Art Association of May 2 as outlined in statement of Manning Brothers be accepted on the understanding that complete control of the work be in the hands of the Trustees.¹⁴²

None of the drawings for this work have been located and there are no historic photographs that show any significant planting in the courtyard in the early 20th century.

7.2.4 Library Alterations 1910–1972

The exterior of the Boston Public Library has never undergone a comprehensive restoration. Rather, the work done to the exterior has been undertaken to maintain the building. It has been done primarily on an as-need basis and, with only minor exceptions, has preserved the original building fabric. Since there have been no comprehensive restoration campaigns, the work described in this section is organized chronologically for each of the principal building elements.

7.2.4.1 Foundation

In 1929 the Trustees considered re-laying the front platform. An examination disclosed a serious rotting of the piles under the main foundations, so work on the platform was temporarily discontinued. The BPL Trustees' Annual Report stated that, "unless some method can be found and applied whereby the 'water-table' underlying the Back Bay section of the city can be stabilized, future trouble with the underpinning of the Library Building is to be feared."¹⁴³

7.2.4.2 Exterior Walls

There is very little documentation for work that has been done on the exterior walls of the McKim Building. Fortunately the masonry materials—granite, brick, terra cotta and bluestone—chosen for the walls are very durable. Even the marble has aged relatively well. The work undertaken has been to keep the building weathertight and has not included any significant alterations. The Trustees' Reports document the following work on the exterior walls.

In 1927, the exterior facades and walls of inner court were repointed. In 1933, the Examining Committee reported that the west wall of the building was bulging. They recommended that the ongoing investigation continue. Building Department permits indicate that in 1961 the upper part of the west exterior wall was to be reconstructed. (The Building Department permit is the only record for this work. Any physical evidence of these repairs would have been obliterated by the construction of the Johnson Building.)

In 1971 the McKim Building was cleaned and exterior lighting was installed on the Dartmouth Street façade. No information is given for how the building was cleaned. The

work provided a beautiful backdrop for a holiday ceremony at which the *Boston Globe* proclaimed,

For the noble façade of the Library, which is one of this country's architectural treasures (as its contents are internal treasures) stood suddenly forth in the night as it had not stood before in all the 76 years it has been embellishing the square.¹⁴⁴

In addition to these entries, there is physical evidence of other work that has been done to the building. Additional repointing has been done since 1927, and there have been some repairs made to cracks in the granite. The building was also cleaned prior to 1971. Early photographs of the building show it heavily soiled, and there is mention of heavy soiling on the exterior of the building in 1903 due to the consumption of soft coal, which was necessary during the coal strike.¹⁴⁵ When and how it was cleaned, however, is not documented.

The platform surrounding the exterior granite walls of the Library has been repaired several times. It was first reconstructed in 1931, both to correct structural deficiencies and to create more storage space. In 1958, Gilbert Small & Company conducted repairs to the platforms, including repointing the pavers and repairing the concrete substructure.

7.2.4.3 Windows

The windows in the McKim Building have received typical maintenance repairs—replacement of broken glass, re-puttying and repainting. The color on the windows evolved over time on the street elevations from dark green to black and on the courtyard from cream to varying shades of yellow and tan. Few other alterations were made to the windows, with one noted exception, the removal of the double glazing in the Bates Hall level arcade windows. This work was probably done in the 1960s, when Gilbert Small & Co. repaired the Library windows. There is a set of drawings by Gilbert Small & Co. dated November 1964 entitled “Repairs to Windows and Certain Doors Including Painting.”¹⁴⁶ Recent restoration of these windows confirmed that they originally had double glazing, though all of it had been previously removed.

7.2.4.4 Doors

The arched openings on Dartmouth Street, which were originally closed only with wrought iron gates, have been enclosed with glazed, paneled wooden doors. It is not known when this space was enclosed, though it seems likely with all the early concerns regarding heat in the building, that this may have been an early alteration. It also would have been very difficult to open and close the bronze doors, so that it was more than likely done by 1904 when the bronze doors were installed.

The Boylston Street entry, which was eliminated as a principal entrance to the building in 1898, was further compromised by the construction of the Copley Square subway station in 1912. The station's kiosk, which is located directly in front of the Boylston Street entrance, faces away from the Library, allowing people to enter and exit from the sidewalk. It effectively creates a barrier between the sidewalk and the north facade of the McKim building.

The Blagden Street entrance is not shown in any of the early photographs of the building, so it is not known how it has been altered. The existing wood paneled glazed doors appear to be modern, although their design is appropriate for the building. Since the doors are in good condition and this has been a utilitarian entrance, a best guess is that the existing doors are reproduction doors that replicate the design of the original doors in this location.

The bronze sculptures, designed by Bela L. Pratt, after the death of St. Gaudens, were installed on the granite pedestals in 1912.¹⁴⁷ The sculptures are single figures; the figure on the left side of the entry door symbolizes Science, and the figure on the right side of the entry door symbolizes Art. The pedestals on which the sculptures are seated are carved with the names of famous artists and scientists.

7.2.4.5 Roofs

The main roof and arcade roof of the Library have been a constant source of problems. The entries in the Trustees Annual Reports document their need for nearly continuous repair. The first entry in this period occurs in 1912 when minor repairs were made to the roof and gutters. The following year, extensive repairs were made to the plaster surface of the groined arches in the courtyard arcade. In 1915, the courtyard arcade roof continued to have problems, and more repairs were made to the tile roof after severe storms. Again in 1916 "considerable work" was done to the main roof and gutters. In 1919, at the recommendation of Thomas A. Fox of Fox & Gale Architects, extensive repairs were again made to the roofs and flashings of the arcade (fig. D-10). In addition, "usual repairs" were made to the roof and gutters on the Central Building, and "unexpected repairs" were necessary on the roof of the Annex. Only one year later, in 1920, John Farquhar's Sons, Inc. relined the gutters with new copper and flashing and replaced tiles wherever necessary. By 1924, however, the Report of the Examining Committee notes "leaks in roof." In 1925, increased appropriations allowed for these leaks to be repaired, and the metal secondary roof and catch-pans over Bates Hall were repaired where necessary. Yet another major repair was begun on the roof in 1926 when 20,000 tiles were repointed with "plastic compound." In 1927, two-thirds of roof tiles (50,000) were repointed, and by 1928 all repointing and replacement of roof tiles was completed. Also in 1928, two large

skylights were replaced, and the roof ridge cresting was furnished with new supports of brass.¹⁴⁸

In 1937, in response to the continual repairs necessary on the roof, a study was done by J. R. Worcester & Co. to make a recommendation for a fundamental and permanent treatment of the problem.¹⁴⁹ They reported it would cost \$256,000 to remedy. In 1942 J. R. Worcester & Co. carried out a major roof restoration involving reinforcement of roof trusses and installation of a concrete plank at the roof.¹⁵⁰ In 1951 Gilbert Small & Co. repaired the arcade tar and gravel roof, built a new wood deck over it, and removed the granite steps from the arcade and built new wooden steps.¹⁵¹ In addition, Gilbert Small & Co. also worked on the main roof in 1955, removing and reinstalling all the tile. The removal of the skylights in the main roof was probably done as part of this work, though the drawing that describes this work is undated.¹⁵² There is a set of 1956 drawings which indicates that the copper cheneau and its brass interior and exterior supports were repaired and reset.¹⁵³ Finally, in 1961, the tar and gravel roof on the arcade was replaced, and a new wood deck was installed.¹⁵⁴ Although these roof repairs were intended only to keep the building weathertight, they did result in some alterations to the exterior appearance of the building.

On the main roof, the changes seem to have occurred primarily in the flat portion of the roof. The earliest drawing of this roof that identifies materials is an August 1933 Fox & Gale drawing that states “Flat deck roofed with slate.”¹⁵⁵ An undated drawing further states “Flat roof—12” x 12” slate on 3” slab. No reinforcing steel.” Between 1933 and 1955, the slate roof must have been replaced with tar and gravel, since the 1955 Gilbert Small & Co. drawings state, “Repair existing tar and gravel where new gravel stops installed.”¹⁵⁶ The 1955 work also removed all of the skylights from the flat roof.

7.2.4.6 Interior Court

The interior court received few alterations between 1910 and 1972. As described in the roof section of the Historic Structure Report, the arcade roof continued to be problematic, and along with the plaster of the arcade ceiling was repaired repeatedly.

In 1927, the walls of the inner court were repointed.¹⁵⁷ The fountain basin was also rebuilt in 1929.¹⁵⁸ The brick and marble paving on the sides of the grand stair projection were altered and covered over at some time, though this work is not documented. It was probably done in conjunction with alterations to the building’s mechanical systems.

There is another entry in the 1933 Trustees’ Annual Report in the Report of the Examining Committee: “Planting in courtyard was excellent, plan designed by landscape

architects with final scheme in view.” There is no reference as to whom the landscape architects might be, and no drawings or planting plans have been found for this work.

There is one set of drawings in the BPL archives for plantings in the courtyard by Patsy Boycé.¹⁵⁹ The drawings are undated, though they appear to be relatively recent.

Figure E-54 is a photo of the interior court taken in the 1960s showing mature plantings and a rather overgrown appearance. Figure CE-3 is a contemporary photograph of the interior court showing it with a more formal planting plan, consisting of stone covered walks and clearly delineated planting beds. Small trees are now located in the courtyard, rather than at the edge of the arcade. Both of these more recent photographs show a planting plan that is much more complicated and cluttered than the original planting plans for the interior court.

7.3 INTERIOR OF THE BUILDING

7.3.1 Ground Floor

The ground floor of McKim's Boston Public Library Building contained the vaulted Entrance Hall from which one could access both the Grand Staircase leading to the Bates Hall Reading Room and the corridors leading to the courtyard. Originally the Ground Floor contained only two public rooms. Until 1908, the Newspaper and Periodical Rooms in the northeast corner were the only rooms used by patrons, rather than for administrative duties of the Library. The private rooms included the Catalogue Room, Ordering Room, Bindery and Printing Rooms, and Newspaper Files Room. McKim's scheme to put the main public reading room and other public rooms on the second floor was clearly inspired by European models of the grand *piano nobile*. His design created a dramatic sequence of entry and movement away from the ground floor to the Bates Hall floor above. Throughout the building's history, the Library's Examining Committee expressed concern with this mode of organization. The first floor was the most accessible to patrons, but contained the least amount of public space. Major use changes eventually occurred to modify the building to suit their views (See plans contained after the Introduction to Section 7.0).

The earliest change that occurred on the Ground Floor was the enclosure of the Boylston Street Driveway in 1898. Space considerations facilitated this alteration, which created a new Periodical Reading Room. In 1898, the Newspaper collection was moved into the original Periodical Reading Room, but no physical changes were made to the room aside from furniture. Also in 1898, the Ordering Room and adjacent Service Corridor were combined into one large room and renamed the Receiving and Ordering Department. Behind this department in the southwest corner of the stacks, an area was designated the Branch Department.

By 1908, the Bindery and Printing Department were moved out of the Central Library Building, making room for a large Patent Library in the northwest corner of this floor. This change added another public space to the Ground Floor. After this, few changes were made on the floor until around 1920 when a small Open Shelf department was created in the former Lavatory and Stenographer spaces off the north corridor.

In the 1950s and '60s, Milton Lord finally heeded the Examining Committee's advice to put more public uses on the Ground Floor, and major changes were realized in the Entrance Hall and southeast corner of the Ground Floor. The Entrance Hall was transformed into the Main Charging Area with desks and railings placed virtually in the center of the space. The Catalogue Room and Receiving and Ordering Department were changed into a new Open Shelf Department, including rooms for both Adults and

Children. This use change involved altering both furniture and finishes in these spaces. The Cataloguing, Receiving and Ordering functions were moved into remodeled stack space, out of the public realm.

7.3.1.1 Entrance Hall Ground Floor Corridors

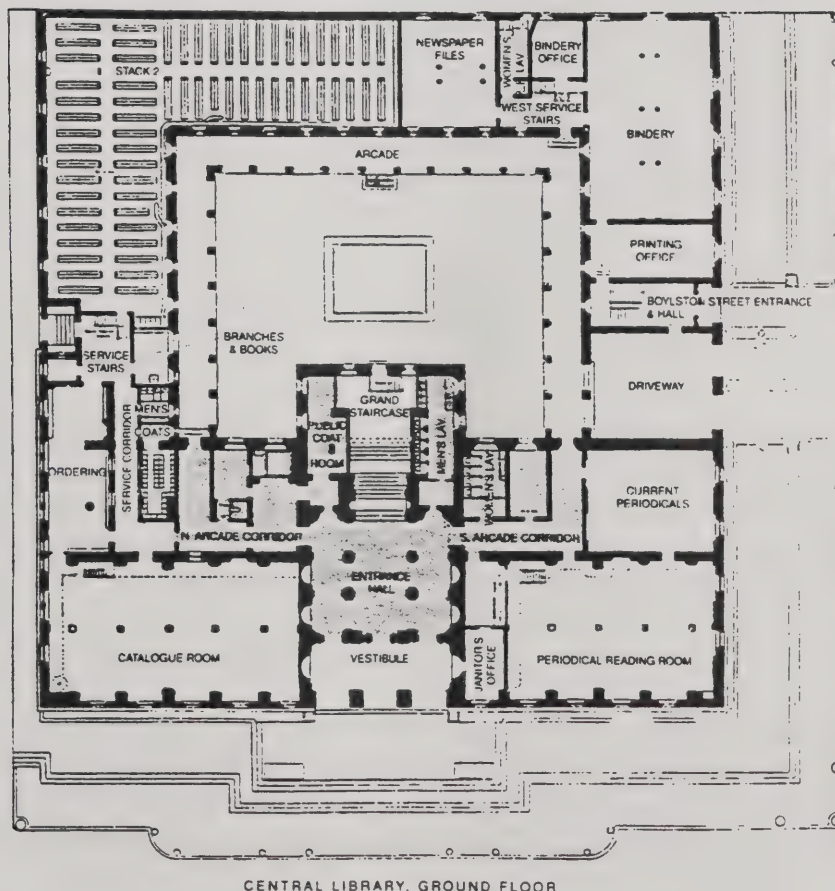
1990s Restoration Room Nos.
210, 203–207

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Entrance Hall
Monograph	Entrance Hall
1895	Entrance Room
1897	Entrance Room
1898	Entrance Hall
1902	Entrance Hall
1908	Entrance Hall
1964	Entrance Hall
1972	Entrance Hall

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed 1895

Physical Description

Upon entering the Library building through the Entrance vestibule in 1895, one arrived at the Entrance Hall (fig. I-6). Called “impressive and beautiful” at the time of opening, the Entrance Hall was a vaulted space (35' x 46') divided into three aisles by gray Iowa sandstone piers.¹⁶⁰ Corridors ran to the right and left from both sides of the Entrance Hall, and straight ahead was the Grand Staircase. Originally, to the south there was a coat room, the elevator, the Catalogue Department and the Receiving and Ordering Departments. To the north, there were toilet rooms and the entrances to the Periodical Rooms. At the end of each corridor there were doors leading to the interior court.

Architectural Details and Finishes

The floor of the Entrance Hall was constructed of white Georgia marble. In various places in the floor, brass intarsia were inlaid. In the center aisle the intarsia were symbols of the zodiac designed by George Maynard, designer of the ceiling of the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City, and forged by John Williams, a worker for Tiffany (figs. I-8, I-9). These decorations were originally created and used in McKim's New York State Building at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893.¹⁶¹ Near the entrance of the hall there was a brass inscription and library seal commemorating the founding of the Library. Near the Grand Staircase were the names of men who were involved in the early history and founding of the Library: Bates, Bigelow, Everett, Ticknor, Quincy, Winthrop, Jewett, and Vattermare.

The walls were made of Iowa sandstone furnished and erected by Robert C. Fisher & Co.¹⁶² There were four niches in the side walls, one in each bay.

The ceiling was vaulted in the center aisle with domes over the side aisles. It was entirely of mosaic, also furnished and laid by Robert C. Fisher & Co.¹⁶³ The mosaic patterns were of delicate vines woven onto trellises in pastel colors (fig. I-7). T. R. Sullivan said that the ceiling work, “unique of its kind in America, recalls the Pompeiian fragments in the Naples museum.”¹⁶⁴ An article in *The Newton Circuit* praised the ceiling stating, “The delicate autumnal tints of the leaves and fruit are faithfully portrayed, and the whole ceiling is a work of art of the highest order.”¹⁶⁵

Like the floor, the ceiling mosaic was a place to honor prominent Bostonians. In the arches of the center aisle were the names Peirce, Adams, Franklin, Emerson, Hawthorne, and Longfellow. In the side bays, there were 24 more names, split into six categories: (1) Theologians: Channing, Parker, Mather, and Eliot; (2) Reformers: Sumner, Phillips,

Mann, and Garrison; (3) Scientists: Gray, Agassiz, Rumford, and Bowditch; (4) Artists: Allston, Copley, Stuart, and Bulfinch; (5) Historians: Parkman, Motley, Bancroft, and Prescott; and finally, (6) Jurists: Webster, Choate, Shaw, and Story.

There were no windows allowing light directly into the Entrance Hall, but the large arched windows of the Grand Staircase Hall let in some light which would stream down the steps into the Hall. A negligible amount of light was let in through the entry vestibule.

While early critics praised it, more recently Jordy criticized the design of the Entrance Hall.

The vaulted entrance hall, with its pastel mosaics, seems somewhat cramped and too fussy in detail to provide the breadth of vestibule proper to such monumentality. Of the entire building this entrance hall most clearly betrays the picturesque. But so easily does the well-lighted stair move out of it that it tends to remain a visual blur.¹⁶⁶

The corridors had terrazzo floors, a marble wainscot, and decoratively painted plaster walls above. The walls were painted with a Pompeian motif primarily in red, yellow, and olive green. The painting was done in 1898 by Elmer Garnsey (fig. CI-3, CI-4).¹⁶⁷

Fixtures and Furnishings

An account of the Library at its opening recalls that there were huge brass candelabra standing beside the piers of the side walls. Early photos show that the light standards now existing in the Entrance Hall were originally there (fig. I-6).¹⁶⁸

Library Alterations to 1909

The Entry Hall itself did not change, but additions were made in the corridors in 1898. On the west side of the north corridor, a public telephone and stenographer station were added in an existing room.¹⁶⁹ The stenographer monitored the telephone and made copies of records in the Library. In 1900 the public lavatories were moved from the north corridor to the west wing of the Library.¹⁷⁰ The terrazzo floor in the north corridor was replaced with marble tiling in 1909.¹⁷¹

Library Alterations 1910–1972

Very little was changed in the Entrance Hall between 1910 and 1920. In the 1920s, however, a fairly significant change of use was made in the north corridor. As an experiment, an Open Shelf Department and a Government News Service Room were created in the spaces previously used for the toilets and public stenographer. The Open

Shelf Room contained a collection of 2,500 popular non-fiction books and a General Information Department. The Government News Service Room was a depository of material issued by the U. S. Government “received by mail from Washington daily.” The collection was reportedly, “kept more completely up to date than that contained in any other library in the country.”¹⁷² The public stenographer’s office was moved to the south corridor. In 1929 the entire marble floor in the Entrance Hall was re-laid.¹⁷³

Whitehill related that the experiment of the Ground Floor Open Shelf Department received a good response from the patrons of the library, but the location in the small rooms of the corridor prevented its growth.¹⁷⁴ It remained in this small space until another solution to the problem was undertaken in the 1950s when an Open Shelf Department, including Children’s and Young Adult’s sections, was put into the southeast corner of the ground floor. (see “Catalogue Room” section)

In the early 1950s, significant alterations related to the new Open Shelf Department were made to the Entrance Hall and to the corridors. In the words of Milton Lord who orchestrated the changes, “steps were instituted to make the Main Entrance Hall look like a library.”¹⁷⁵ The Entrance Hall became, instead of a transitional space, a working area where library functions were carried out. Specifically, two new book charging desks were installed directly inside the Entrance Hall.¹⁷⁶ The spaces next to the stairs on either side were used as areas for the Central Book Return Desk, Information Desk and Library Information Office. In the north corridor, there was also a new room for borrower card issuance, Central Charging Records, and a Cloak Room.¹⁷⁷ All of these spaces had new asphalt tile floors. Some had new hung acoustic ceilings and new leather covered doors. In addition, currently existing lighted exhibition cases were installed in the side wall niches so that interesting library materials could be displayed to library patrons (fig. CI-2). Brass handrails were also installed at the center of the Entrance Hall to direct the flow of patrons.

Of these changes Lord wrote, “this has been accomplished without detracting either from the beauty or the architectural excellences” of the space.¹⁷⁸ Jordy disagreed with Lord as to the level of disruption these changes caused.

... the department store ideal downstairs disturbs the monumentality of McKim’s ground floor. Especially is this true of the entrance foyer, where display cases and posters in addition to the circulation machinery, now obtrude into what was once so pristinely architectural that strangers to the Library repeatedly mistook the premises for a museum or a court house.¹⁷⁹

This arrangement of space lasted until Phase I of the current restoration when they were removed. Today, after the completion of Phase I, the Entrance Hall looks almost exactly as it did upon opening in 1895. The noted exception is the new hanging lamps installed to light the mosaic ceiling.

7.3.1.2 Periodical Reading Room

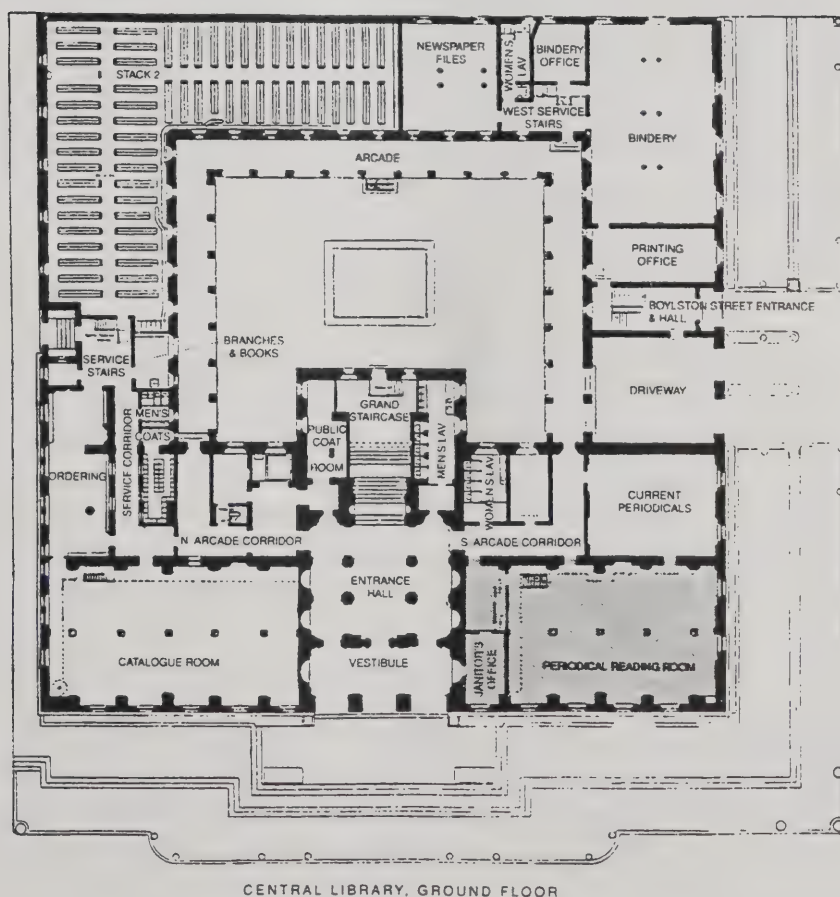
1990s Restoration Room No.
214

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Bound Newspaper & Map Room
Monograph	Periodical Room
1895	Periodical Reading Room
1897	Periodicals
1898	Newspapers
1902	Newspapers
1908	Newspapers Reading Room
1916	Newspapers Reading Room
1953	Social Sciences Department
1959	Newspaper Room
1975	Government Documents

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed in 1895

Purpose

The Periodical Reading Room was a large room that displayed more than 1,500 periodicals for the public's perusal. Reportedly, the library's collection held all the Periodicals in Poole's Index.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

The original location of the Periodical Reading Room was the northeast corner of the ground floor reached by the north corridor from the Main Entrance Hall. An early photo, and the only photo of this room as the "Periodical Room" shows that it was built to the specifications of McKim's original drawing (figs. I-12, D-13).¹⁸⁰ A drawing of the room was published in the Boston Globe, February 1895 article featuring the new Library, (Appendix 11.6). The rectangular two story space (45' x 81') had a row of five plaster finished columns running lengthwise down the center, supporting a terra cotta tiled Guastavino arched ceiling. The floor was terrazzo, and the wainscot on the west wall and the bases of the columns and pilasters were a buff colored brick. In the center of the west wall, there was a fireplace with a simple mantle shelf of buff Indiana limestone. Instead of a brick wainscot, built in wooden bookcases lined the bottom of the north, south, and east walls. Above the bookcases, the walls were plaster. A narrow gallery, accessed by a stair on the north wall, ran around the west and south walls. The gallery had a wooden floor, metal railing, and bookcases covering its walls.

On the south wall, there was one door that led to a small room next to the Entrance Hall. On the west wall, one door led into the corridor and the other led into the smaller Current Periodical Room. On the gallery level of the west wall, two doors led to administrative rooms on the mezzanine story. The north and east walls contained large windows looking out onto Boylston and Dartmouth Streets which provided the room with much natural light. Originally, there was also a small round window in the western bay of the south wall above the gallery bookcases.

Fixtures and Furnishings

The room was furnished with specially designed oak tables and racks for displaying the periodicals. In addition to being placed in the center of the open floor, to maximize the available display space in the room, racks were built around the column bases. Simple Windsor-style chairs were placed around the tables.

In addition to the ample natural light in the room, there were four small lights mounted around each column to light the periodical racks. Similar fixtures were mounted on the pilasters to light the bookcases along the walls. There also appear to have been simple fixtures hanging from the bottom of the gallery, others mounted at the top of the bookcases in the gallery, and table lamps.

Library Alterations to 1909

In 1898, when the porte cochere on Boylston Street was enclosed, the contents of the Periodical Room were consolidated into the converted space and the small Current Periodical Room (215). This alteration left the large corner room to receive the newspaper collection, formerly housed in the northwest corner of the Bates Hall floor. The collection held over 300 newspapers consisting of about 200 from the United States and 80 to 90 international publications.¹⁸¹ Greater accessibility to the public was the motivation for moving the Newspaper Room. In addition, the move freed the northwest space to be used as a Lecture Hall as was originally intended by McKim.¹⁸²

The transition was not complicated because all the special shelving for newspapers had been made for the original Newspaper Room, and the two rooms were similar in size. The most noticeable change that took place in the room after the move, was the furniture—now suited to larger newspapers rather than periodicals. Tables with upright reading surfaces replaced the bookcases along the north and east walls. Above them, reading lights were mounted to the walls. In addition, the fireplace on the west wall was obstructed by a large wooden shelving unit (figs. I-13 to I-15). A plaque recognizing Todd, the benefactor of the Newspaper collection, is mounted on a pilaster on the west wall (fig. I-16).

Trustees' Annual Reports note the early history of the room. In 1907, additional lamps were installed. A "complete renovation" was undertaken in 1909 for which no specific details have been found.¹⁸³

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

The room was painted in 1927, and the ventilation was improved in 1929. By 1933, when most of the library needed improvement, the Examining Committee reported that the ventilation and the tile floor both needed repairs. Unfortunately, this was a period in which budget cuts prevented the library from performing these necessary improvements.¹⁸⁴

In the 1953 modernization campaign, this room became the Social Sciences Department with a Sports and Travel section as well. The newspaper collection was moved to a small

room in the west wing.¹⁸⁵ Although physical changes were not documented, the special newspaper reading tables were most likely removed from the room and replaced by bookcases. The 1959 and 1964 plans, however indicate that this room was the Current Newspaper Room.

A set of 1964 specifications detail cleaning, repairs and restoration of the room. This work included restoring tile to original color and appearance; washing and repainting plastered wall surfaces and columns; washing, repairing and re-varnishing all woodwork; washing all marble surfaces; and washing and re-coating metalwork.¹⁸⁶

7.3.1.3

Current Periodical Room

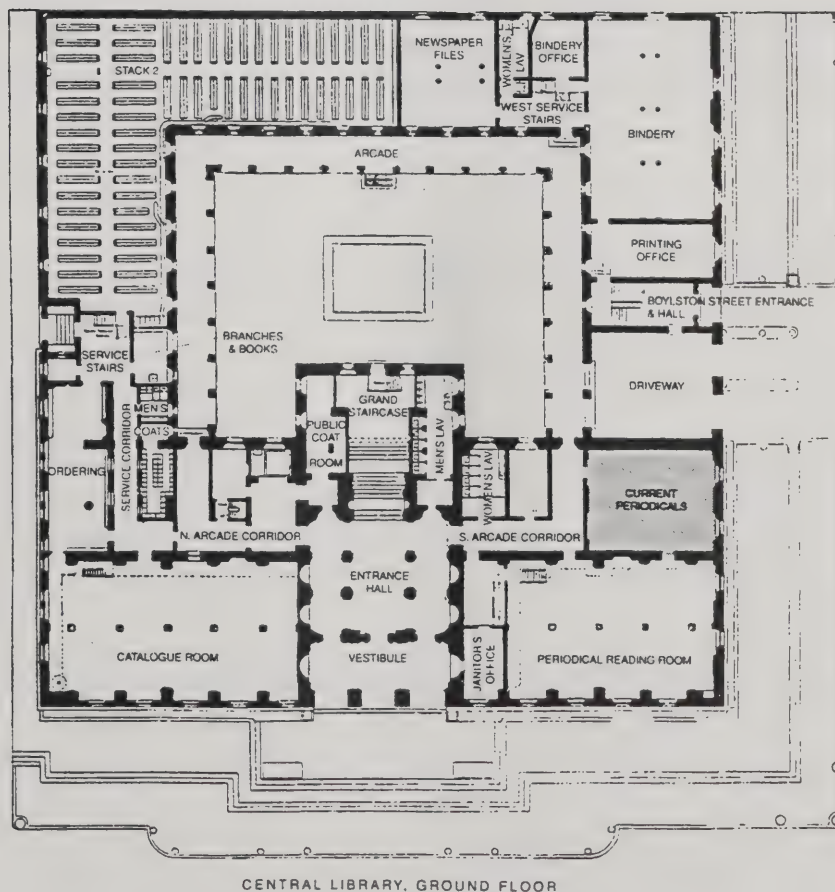
1990s Restoration Room No.
215

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Unbound Pamphlets and Duplicate Exchanges
Monograph	Map Room
1895	Not mentioned
1897	Current Periodicals
1898	Periodicals
1908	Periodicals
1959	Periodical Room
1975	Work & Stack Space for Government Documents Department

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed in 1895

Purpose

This small room, reached either from the north corridor off the Main Entry Hall or through the Periodical Reading Room, was originally used for storing back volumes and overflow from the larger room. It was also used as an overflow reading area for periodicals.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

When designed, this 42-foot by 33-foot room was called the Map Room.¹⁸⁷ The floor, like most others, was of terrazzo. The finishes of the walls and ceiling were distinctive, however, compared to the other rooms in the building. The walls had a bluestone base molding topped by a buff colored brick wainscot. Bands of light brick, terra cotta, and bluestone formed arches around the two rectangular windows in the north wall and surrounded the doors in the other three walls. The walls themselves were plastered. Between the windows on the north wall there was a circle of brick with a plaster panel inside. The barrel-vaulted Guastavino ceiling was of heavily coffered painted terra cotta tiles (fig. I-17).

Fixtures and Furnishings

Built in bookshelves and oak cases lined the walls of the first floor. Rectangular tables for reading filled the floor space.

Library Alterations to 1909

In 1898, a door on the west wall was created to open into the newly enclosed porte cochere to its west. A gallery, which ran along the south and west walls, was added at this time. The gallery, like the others in the building, had a wooden floor and iron rail. Decorative iron brackets supported the bottom. More oak cases were housed on the gallery level.

The room was painted in 1898 and again in 1906. Also in 1906, a book elevator was installed.¹⁸⁸

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

In the 1953 changes, this room was changed to a repository for Government Documents, and the Periodicals Department was moved into the west wing with the Newspaper Department. The 1959 plans, however, still call it the Periodical Room.

7.3.1.4 Boylston Street Driveway (a.k.a. Porte Cochere)

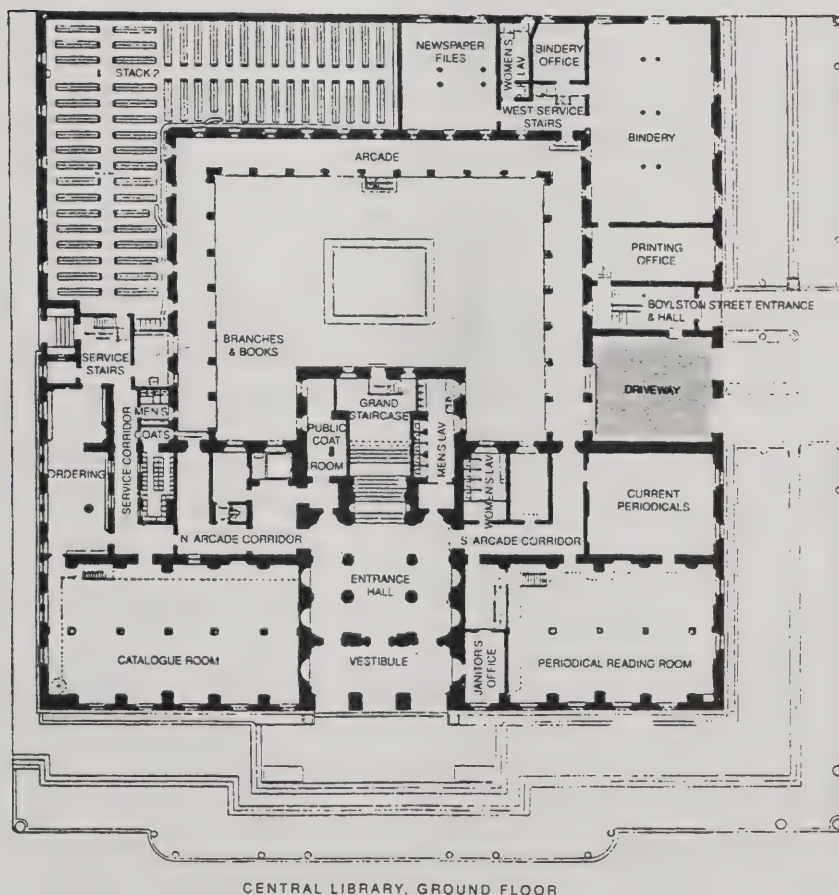
1990s Restoration Room No.
216

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Driveway
Monograph	Duplicate Exchange & Driveway
1895	Driveway
1897	Driveway
1898	Periodicals
1908	Periodicals
1959	Periodical Room
1975	Government Documents Department Stacks

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed in 1895

Purpose

A covered driveway was originally placed in the center of the Boylston Street elevation behind the three iron gates that still grace the facade today. It provided a sheltered drop off location for patrons to enter and exit the library. It afforded direct access to the interior court, the Newspaper Room in the northwest corner of the building and to other rooms in the west wing. The need for more interior space, which arose almost immediately after the building opened, necessitated the enclosure of the carriage entrance to create another space for periodicals.¹⁸⁹ The remodeling was done by Jenney & Fox in 1898.¹⁹⁰ This new Periodical Room, situated en suite with the new Newspaper Room and Periodical Rooms, was reached only through the Small Periodical Room.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

The room was plainly finished with plaster walls painted a darker color below the picture molding, and white above. A simple plaster molding ran around the plaster coated Guastavino vaulted ceiling. Large windows, which formerly served as entrances, allowed in a great deal of light on the Boylston Street side as did the large arched windows on the courtyard side (fig. I-18).

Fixtures and Furnishings

Special oak reading tables were lighted with table lamps. Also around the walls, there were desks displaying periodicals for reading with wall lights mounted above them for the readers. In the center of the space, there were oak racks displaying the periodicals.

A brass chandelier with multiple bulbs hung from the center of the ceiling for additional lighting. This chandelier is now hanging from the ceiling of the original small Periodical Room (215) next door.

Library Alterations to 1909

No reported alterations were made in this period.

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

In the 1953 changes, this room was slated to be changed at least temporarily to the Maps Department. In the 1959 plans, however, it is still designated as a Periodical Room.

7.3.1.5 Bindery and Printing Office

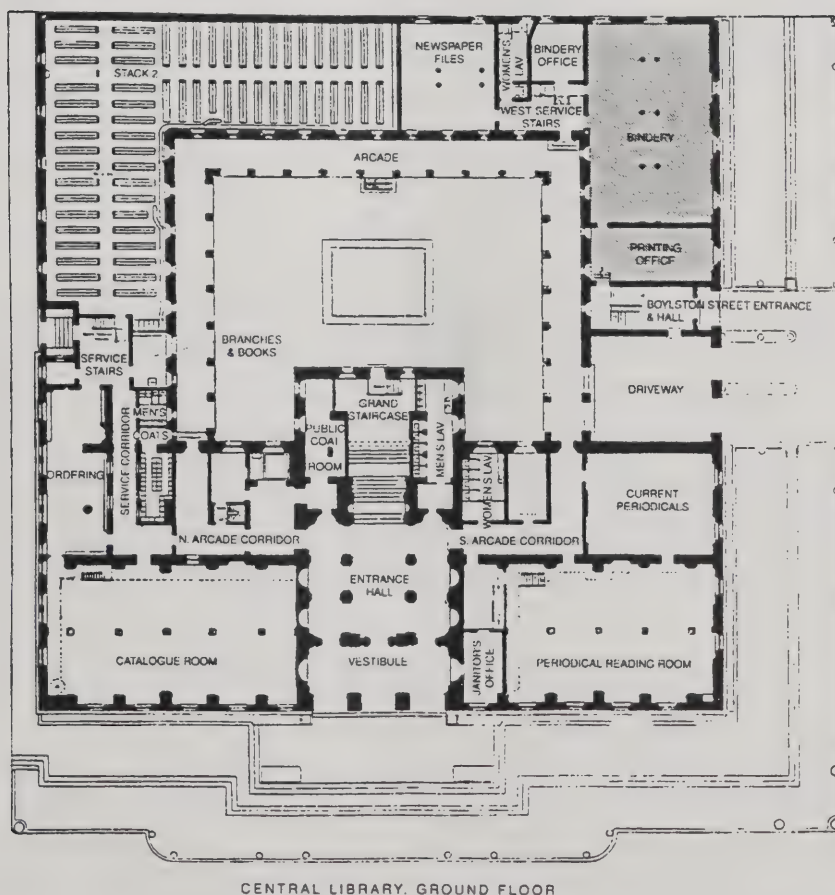
1990s Restoration Room No.
218

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Stack
Monograph	Bindery & Women's Room
1895	Bindery & Printing Office
1897	Bindery & Printing Room
1898	Bindery & Printing Department
1902	Patent Library
1908	Patent Library
1959	Patent Room

Plan as built in 1985

N→



Library as Completed in 1895

Purpose

From the outset, the BPL had its own in-house Printing Office and Bindery located in the northwest corner of the Ground Floor. The Printing Office created cards for the card catalogues, finding lists, bibliographies and special catalogues. Small reported that the BPL owned a “Mergenthaler” type-setting machine or “linotype,” which was revolutionary because it set by lines rather than by individual letters.¹⁹¹ The Bindery bound thousands of volumes each year including periodicals being moved to the stacks and books needing repairs. In addition to binding, backing of maps and illustrations and “inlaying” manuscripts in leaves of a uniform size, in order that they may be bound and shelved as volumes,” was also done in the Bindery.¹⁹²

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

Other than the dimensions 18-feet by 40-feet, no other descriptions of the original Printing Room have been found. The Bindery, 40-feet by 67-feet, was described in the 1895 Handbook as a “lofty, and amply lighted”¹⁹³

Library Alterations to 1909

Purpose

In 1902 the Bindery and Printing Department were moved out of the building, and the Patent Library was moved into these two rooms. The Patent Library, formerly housed in the small room adjacent to the Children’s Room on the Bates Hall Floor, was reported to contain a collection of patent publications that was “the best in this country outside of Washington.”¹⁹⁴ By the time it moved into its new, larger space, it contained publications of the patent offices of the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Canada, Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales, West Australia, and Italy. In addition, this room was used for viewing large volumes of bound newspapers kept in an adjoining room.¹⁹⁵

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

One photograph was found of this room after alterations were made to suit its new purpose (fig. I-89). In addition, drawings prepared by Jenney & Fox for the alterations are located in the BPL Drawing Archive.¹⁹⁶ One major change to the structure of the room was the addition of a gallery level. The gallery was on the courtyard side and spanned half the width of the room. The room had plaster walls and ceiling. The walls appear to have been painted darker at the bottom with a chairrail or painted trim separating the two colors. The floor appears to be terrazzo. The gallery had a wood paneled half-wall spanning between the square columns.

Fixtures and Furnishings

The furnishings were typical of the rest of the Library, long wood tables with Windsor chairs. For viewing the large bound newspapers, there were tables with angled surfaces. The flat tables had double-necked lights, and the angled tables had lights that were similar to bookshelf lights. There were double globed sconces mounted on the walls and on the columns at both levels. Rows of bookshelves were under the gallery and in the space below it.

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

No published changes were made in these years.

7.3.1.6 Catalogue Room

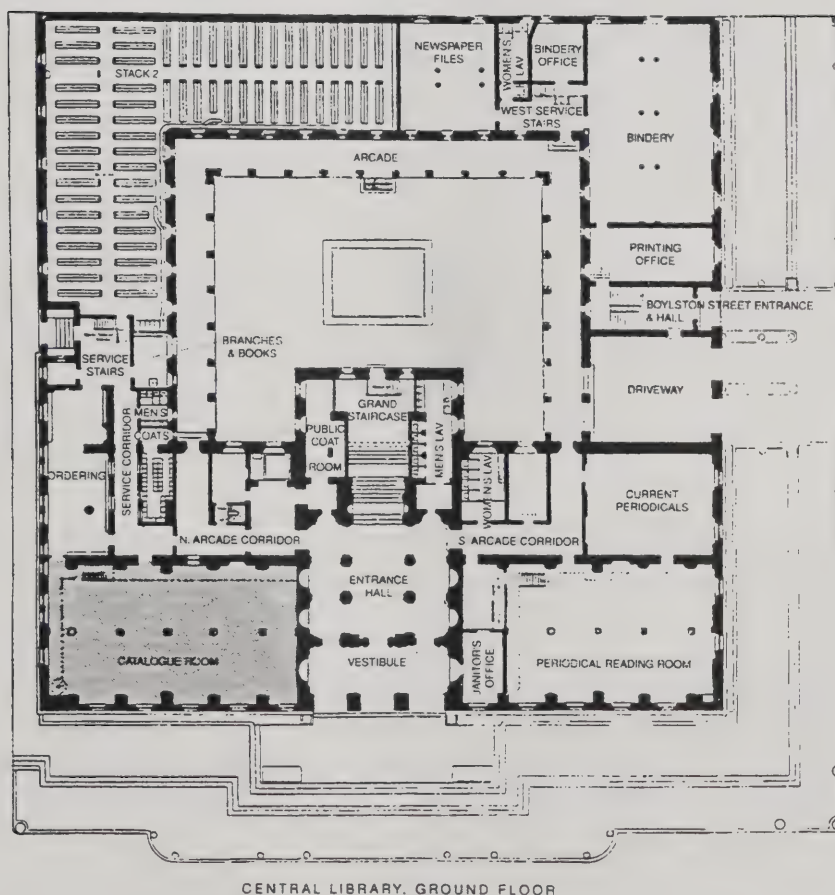
1990s Restoration Room No.
202

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Card Catalogue / Catalogue
Monograph	Cataloguer
1895	Catalogue Room
1897	Catalogue
1898	Catalogue & Shelf Department
1908	Catalogue & Shelf Department
1959	Open Shelf Department
1964	Open Shelf Department
1972	Microtext & Document Services

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed in 1895

Purpose

Reached from the south corridor from the Main Entrance Hall, the southeast corner room on the Ground Floor, originally called the Catalogue Room, housed the department responsible for overseeing the card catalogue and producing finding lists for the Library. They also prepared bibliographies that were published for use nationwide.¹⁹⁷

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

The Catalogue Room was the same size (45' x 81') and finished similarly to the Periodical Reading Room at the north end of the hall. The floors were terrazzo. A buff colored brick wainscot ran around the south and west walls and around the column bases in the center of the room. On the north and east walls instead of a wainscot, low built-in bookcases filled each bay between the pilasters. Above the wainscot and bookcases, the walls were plastered up to the Guastavino tiled ceiling. Although many of the ceilings in the building were of Guastavino construction, each had a different design. This ceiling consisted of eight shallow vaulted domes of terra cotta tiles installed in a concentric circle pattern. In addition to the entry door from the corridor, one could also enter the room through the Ordering and Receiving department or the service area next to it. Leather doors filled all three doorways (fig. I-20).

There was a gallery with wood floors running along the west and south walls. The gallery was accessed by two staircases—a spiral stair in the southeast corner and a straight stair on the west wall. Large windows along the east and south walls provided ample daylight for the room.

Fixtures and Furnishings

In addition to smaller oak desks, this large room was filled with long oak working tables. Early photos also show Windsor chairs (some on wheels), stools, card catalogue cases and bookshelves scattered around the room.

The original lighting consisted of brass sconces with round globes mounted around the bottom part of the columns and on the side walls. There were also shaded desk and table lamps and small shaded lamps atop the freestanding bookcases.

Library Alterations to 1909

In 1906, additional lighting was provided by simple brass fixtures mounted on brass bands around the middle of the columns. The sconces at the bottom of the column were not used anymore except to provide outlets for wiring desk lamps (fig. I-21). The Examining Committee called for improvement of the lighting again in 1920, but no record of changes has been found.

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

Purpose

In 1924, the Examining Committee, noting that it was impractical to house a department performing internal functions in such a prominent location in the building, recommended that the Catalogue Department be moved to the Annex to make space for the Children's Room (then on the Bates Hall Floor). By 1930, the Catalogue Department was still located in its original location, and the Examining Committee again called for its removal to make room for a public use.¹⁹⁸

In the 1950s "modernization," the Catalogue Room was one of the most drastically altered. After many years of urging by the Examining Committee, the Catalogue Department was moved out of this easily accessed location, and a new Open Shelf Department was created in its place. Milton Lord described the new department as the "equivalent of a large branch library or a small city or large town public library ... in attractively packaged form."¹⁹⁹ The ground floor room provided self-service bookshelves and browsing areas. The new department extended to the basement area directly beneath this room which housed a poetry corner, smoking area and soundproof listening booths.²⁰⁰

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

Although David McCord described the newly renovated spaces as a "world of plastics and indirect light,"²⁰¹ Milton Lord was pleased with their design.

Beautiful rooms have been formed which are a joy in themselves, and entirely in harmony with both Mr. McKim's building of the 1890s and the modern demands of the 1950s.²⁰²

A set of 1949 drawings by Ames, Child & Graves illustrated the changes made to this room.²⁰³ The room was partitioned into three large spaces with two small offices at the

south end. The largest space was designated as a general Open Shelf Department, and two smaller spaces were reserved as Young Adults and Adults browsing areas. One office at the south end was a work space, while the other was for Readers' Advisors. In the center of the space, opposite the entry door, a sleek L-shaped charge desk was installed.²⁰⁴

A new stair on the north wall led from this level to the basement level. The old straight gallery stair was also altered to run perpendicular to the west wall rather than parallel to it, and another straight stair was added at the north end of the gallery. The spiral stair in the southeast corner was removed due to the shortening of the gallery on the south wall.

The finishes in the room were also “modernized.” In addition to the new glazed partitions, the terrazzo floor was covered with “Rubber Tile” (linoleum). The ironwork of the gallery balustrade and stair railings was sheathed in blonde wood with a brass cap. New wooden bookcases replaced the original ones on the north and east walls, and additional freestanding bookcases were installed.²⁰⁵ A set of 1962 specifications relates that there was “damage from leakage” in one bay of the room on the east wall. The specifications direct to “repaint all of one side of the bay in order to conceal all damage.”²⁰⁶ It is interesting to note that this damage is still visible today (fig. CI-10).

Fixtures and Furnishings

To correspond with the new modern design and concept of the library space, the furniture was also updated. In the Open Shelf area, there were bookshelves, while in the browsing areas there was comfortable furniture. Milton Lord inferred the superiority of the new “attractive living room furniture” distinguishing it from the old “formal library tables and chairs.”²⁰⁷

New fluorescent lighting was provided, and the existing hanging fixtures were covered with brass boxes. No evidence was found to indicate when hanging fixtures were first installed, but they exist on the 1949 drawing.

In 1972–73, upon the opening of the Johnson Building, which provided much more space for home borrowing shelves, the Open Shelf Department in the McKim building was converted into a storage area for the Microtext and Document department. The finishes of the Open Shelf Department still remain, albeit in deteriorating condition, and the room is now filled with shelving and storage cabinets. In addition to the changes in furniture, the staircase to the basement has also been closed.

7.3.1.7

Ordering Room

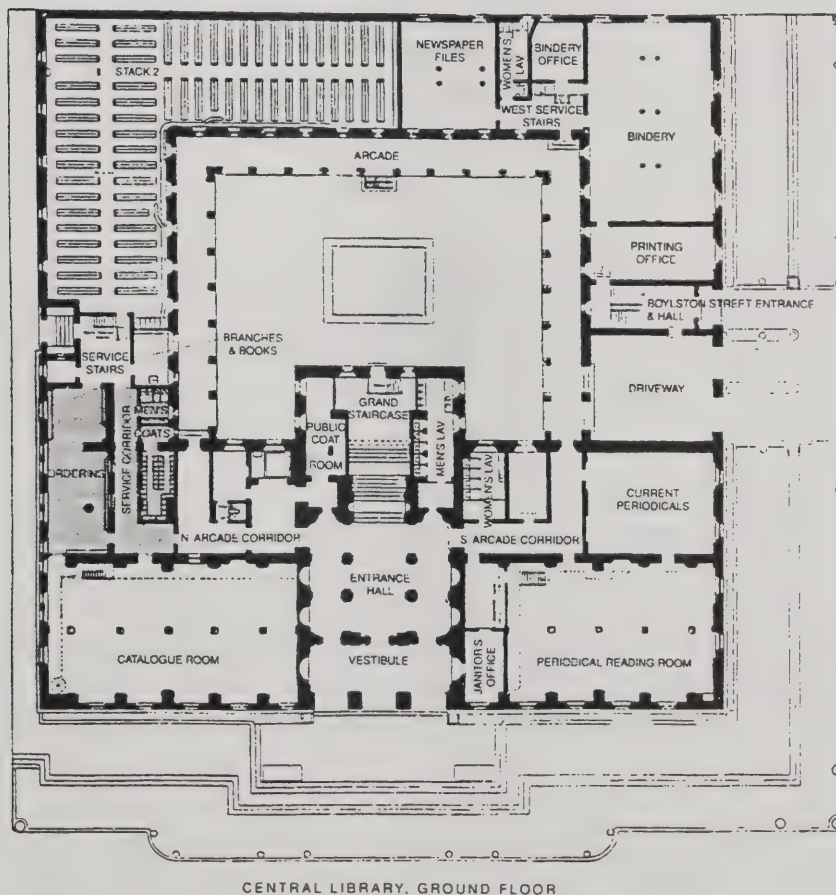
1990s Restoration Room Nos.
201, 239, 240

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Receiving and Ordering
Monograph	Receiving and Ordering
1895	Ordering Room, Service Corridor, Men's Coat Room
1897	Ordering Room, Service Corridor, Men's Coat Room
1898	Receiving and Ordering
1902	Receiving and Ordering
1908	Receiving and Ordering
1959	Children's Section Open Shelf Department
1972	Microtext Department

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed in 1895

Purpose

The Ordering Room was originally the space reached by walking straight down the south corridor to its south end. The Ordering Room housed the Library's department that ordered, examined and listed new additions to the Library's collection. Across a wide corridor, there was a male employee's coat room and lavatory.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

Beyond the original drawings, there is one photograph documenting the original condition of this room. Not open to the public, the 41-foot by 55-foot room was plainly decorated. McKim's original plans seem to have been carried out (fig. D-15). The drawings called for a terrazzo floor, a buff Indiana limestone mantel on the north wall, and built-in bookcases on the north and east elevations. There were four small windows looking onto Blagden Street in the south wall and windows looking into the corridor in the north wall. The room was separated into two spaces by a wall with a large opening.²⁰⁸ The ceiling was made of painted Guastavino tiled arches supported by a single square column.

Fixtures and Furnishings

The photograph of the room shows several simple wooden desks, Windsor chairs, card catalog cases, a large work table, and bookcases. Tracks for the book railway are suspended from the ceiling coming from the direction of the first floor stacks (fig. I-22).

Library Alterations to 1909

In 1898 the Ordering Department doubled in size to encompass the space formerly housing the service corridor, men's coat room and lavatory. Plans label this newly created space the Receiving and Ordering Department. The Guastavino ceiling spanned the entire space supported by more square columns. Decorative brass fixtures with glass shades hung from the center of each vault, and the typical double armed desk lamps also provided artificial light. Movable furnishings included wooden desks and chairs and at least one long table. Bookcases and card catalogue cases lined the north and east walls (fig. I-23).

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

Purpose

In the 1950s “modernization,” the Ordering and Receiving Room became the Children’s Room of the new Open Shelf Department. After years of urging, the Examining Committee’s recommendation to move the Children’s Room to a more accessible location than the Bates Hall Floor was finally heeded.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

David McCord described the newly renovated room as “modern with low-ceiling, brilliantly lighted, efficient—though at startling variance with what we have just left [Entrance Hall].”²⁰⁹ No written description or photographic evidence has been found, but the drawings prepared by Ames, Child & Graves in 1951 provide details for the alterations.

As in the Catalogue Room, the terrazzo floor was covered with rubber tiles. New wooden bookcases were installed around the bottom portion of the walls. Above the bookcases, new plaster walls on metal furring were erected. The recesses in the north wall were filled in, and a small office, separated from the larger space by a glass and wood partition, was created in the southeast corner of the room.²¹⁰

Fixtures and Furnishings

The furniture was most likely similar to the new furniture installed in the Catalogue Room, like living room furniture, and the same fluorescent box fixtures were hung from the ceiling.

When compared to the old Children’s Room, McCord explained that “there is not majesty in this room, but there is more radiant cheerfulness than in the old room on the second floor.”²¹¹

In 1972–73, upon the opening of the Johnson Building, which provided much more space for home borrowing shelves, the Children’s Room was converted into the Microtext and Document department.

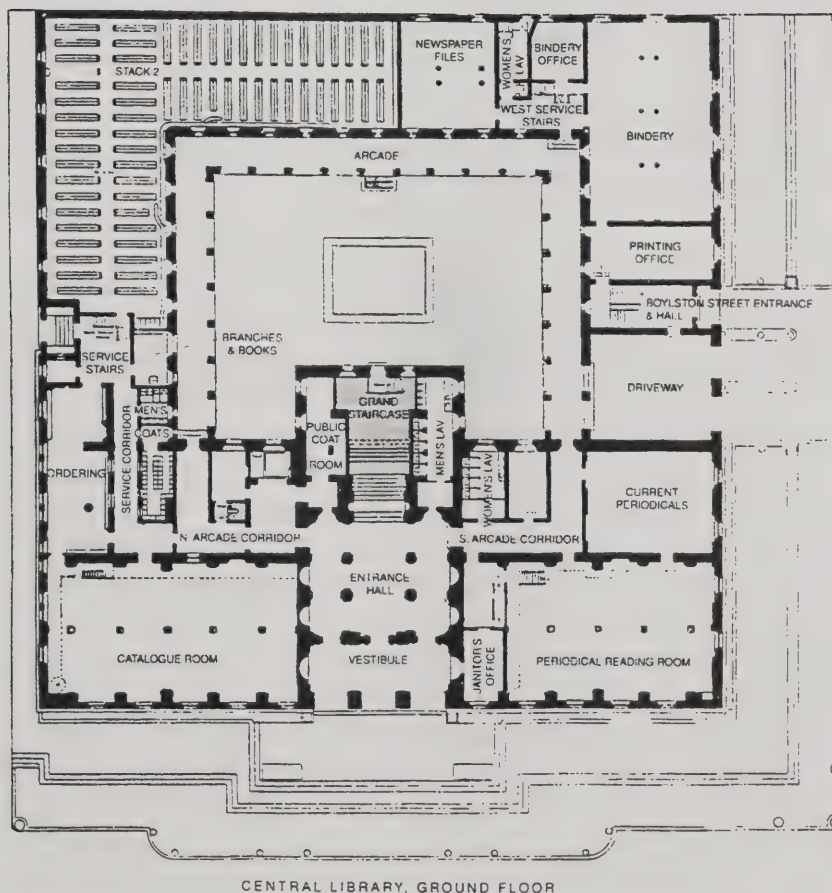
7.3.1.8 Grand Staircase Hall

1990s Restoration Room No.
207

Use/Name Changes of Room
1895 to present Grand Staircase Hall

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed in 1895

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

In August 1889 Batterson, See, & Eisele were contracted to construct the Grand Staircase Hall with Siena marble for a fee of \$69,173. Frederick P. Hill, an associate of McKim at the time of building explained McKim's obsession with the staircase construction. He said that McKim

... did not want any pains nor time spared in making it as nearly perfect as was possible, despite the fact that even at that time the expenses on the work had exceeded the total amount of the commission.²¹²

As built, the entrance to the Staircase Hall was a large marble caissoned arch. On each side wall of the arched opening there was a small rectangular niche ornamented with caissons of Echaillon marble. A single stair ascended to a landing where it separated to either side and turned upward. At the landing, three large arched windows allowed streams of light into the grand two-story space, and a heavy oak double door opened to a balcony overlooking the courtyard. In the same wall as the balcony door were two small rectangular windows that also looked into the interior court. Around the side walls of the Staircase Hall there was a highly polished yellow Siena marble wainscot and Corinthian pilasters that supported marble arches. These arches framed plaster panels that were eventually filled with Puvis de Chavannes' murals (fig. I-24).

The stair treads were constructed of French ivory-gray Echaillon marble mottled with fossils, and the landing was inlaid with geometric shaped patterns of red Numidian marble. The yellow Siena marble wall panels, balustrade, and arches surrounding the Puvis de Chavannes panels, however, were clearly the focal point of McKim's design. The staircase panels and stiles began at the bottom of the staircase in darker tones of yellow and saffron, gradually fading to lighter tones at the top. The darker marble at the bottom was Monte Riete, a marble that came only from a quarry owned by monks who used no machinery to quarry the stone. Even with manual removal methods, the monks rarely removed stones, so the supply was extremely limited. McKim's specification to match the coloring and markings and to obtain the gradual lightening of the panels decreased the acceptable supply even more. After the marble was gathered from various yards across the country, it had to be cut and carefully inspected. Hill related that the majority of the pieces were rejected. The hardship of this process on those involved in the construction was related in a letter from Batterson, See, and Eisele to McKim dated June 1894.

Please grant us a payment on account of Marble Work in the Boston Public Library.... As you are aware we had to buy about ten times the quantity of stock required for this job, to pick stock of the desired color from. It necessitated the outlay of a great deal of money and if you would kindly grant us a payment of ten or twelve thousand dollars it would help us along very much.²¹³

The staircase took a total of sixteen months to construct, but the resounding praise McKim received may have justified his perfectionism. Just after the staircase was finished, Augustus St. Gaudens wrote to McKim, “We were completely bowled over by it; it is a splendid piece of work and even as it is, without the paintings of Puvis, I know nothing to equal it.”²¹⁴ At the opening of the Library, the *Boston Globe* called it “the great gem of the entire building.”²¹⁵ Frederick Hill, a protégé of McKim’s, was also pleased with the outcome of the stairhall.

... nowhere in the world is there a more beautiful piece of marble work of this type. Mr. McKim had again shown his guiding principle and striven for the best with an utter disregard for what it meant in effort, time and cost.²¹⁶

Most recently, Jordy praised McKim’s stairwell also.

... the effect as a whole of the beautifully matched and detailed marble, and the majestic ease of the ascent, to be contrasted with the arduous climbs in many comparable beaux-arts buildings, make the stairway the cynosure of the interior.²¹⁷

The plaster ceiling is coffered with heavily modeled rosettes and Renaissance styled borders. Painted by Elmer Garnsey in ivory with light blue in the deepest recesses, the ceiling complemented the blues and greens of the Puvis murals on the walls.²¹⁸

Fixtures and Furnishings

None of the early descriptions noted a chandelier or light fixture in the stairhall, nor do any show in the early photographs.

Artwork: Louis St. Gaudens’ Lions (Puvis murals are included in Staircase corridor section)

At the landing, where the single stair splits and stairs run up the north and south sides of the hall, two large pedestals supported lions sculpted by Louis St. Gaudens. The sculptures were commissioned by the 2nd and 20th Massachusetts Regiments. St. Gaudens proved difficult to work with, frequently changing his mind about the terms of the agreement, but his lions were finished by September 1889 and installed in 1891.²¹⁹ The lions, although of Siena marble like the rest of the Staircase Hall, were unpolished and took on a matte gray finish. Augustus St. Gaudens and McKim actually wanted them to be polished and even offered to provide funding if the Regiments could not afford the expense.²²⁰

St. Gaudens expressed his thoughts in a letter to McKim.

I have been seriously considering the matter of the lions and have come to the conclusion now that the hall is complete and all the Sienna marble set that the lions would become much more harmonious as well as imposing if polished ... I write to you feeling sure that the improvement would be so great that if possible an effort should be made to get an appropriation for this purpose.²²¹

McKim agreed.

Being in Boston last week, I was more than ever impressed with the importance of polishing the lions and with the fact that at present they are a discordant element in color and treatment with the remainder of the hall...²²²

In this letter, McKim asks Augustus St. Gaudens to write to Mr. Ropes, personally, to try to convince him to polish “or at least partially polish” the sculptures. The men of the regiments, however, were so impressed with the lions as they were, they could not imagine them to be any better with polishing.

This morning a number of us, representing both regiments, went into the Public Library to see the lions. We were delighted with the lions, but we were without exception all of opinion, that they could not possibly be improved by any treatment that we could conceive of ... the wonderful impression of alertness, vitality and energy produced by these statues would be very likely to be seriously impaired, if they were made, by polishing, of the same color as the marble pedestals on which they were set.²²³

Other critics were not so impressed by the sculptures. Walker called them “over-detailed” in a pose that was “not especially dignified.”²²⁴ Jordy described them as having a “stuffed-doll quality” detracting from the overall effect of the Staircase Hall.²²⁵

On the pedestals beneath each lion, bronze lettered inscriptions commemorated the officers of each regiment who served in the Civil War (fig. I-25).

Library Alterations to 1909

The Staircase Hall has remained virtually the same since its completion. Several small changes in the fixtures have occurred. In 1903, two light standards were moved from Entrance Hall to the platforms on either side of the staircase where they still sit today.²²⁶

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

In the 1921 *Handbook* a spherical chandelier with cut glass is mentioned.²²⁷ A 1952 drawing entitled “Maintenance of the Large Luminaire,” illustrates a large spherical luminaire designed by Rambusch Decorating Company of New York.²²⁸ It is this

luminaire, a larger version of those installed in the Staircase Corridor, that was present in the Grand Staircase Hall in the 1977 Handbook photo. These fixtures were in the Hall until the 1990s restoration. Today the chandelier is tiered with many light bulbs, and the 1953 fixture is hanging in the Government Documents room (originally driveway). The bronze hand rails existing on the steps were also installed in the 1950s modernization campaign (fig. I-26).

7.3.2 Bates Hall Floor

The Bates Hall Floor, second floor of the Library, contains grand public spaces reached from the corridor decorated with the wall murals of Pierre Puvis de Chavannes. Bates Hall, the public reading room is a two-story barrel arched space that extends the full length of the east elevation of the building. Originally, the second floor also housed the Delivery Room, decorated with the wall paintings of Edwin Abbey, the Patent Library, decorated with the ceiling mural of John Elliott, and the Children's Room. In addition, the original Newspaper Room, shortly to become the Lecture Hall, was originally on this floor. The non-public spaces included, the Librarian's Office and Delivery alcove (later Issue Department) located behind the Delivery Room, and the stacks, located in the southwest corner of the plan. In addition, rooms located on Entresol B were accessed from this floor. These included the Trustees' Room, Trustees' Ante Room, and Trustees' Waiting Room.

Most of the changes that occurred on this floor over the years involved the use of the rooms, not the physical layout of the plan. Most physical changes occurred in 1898. The Librarian's Office and Delivery Alcove were changed to the Issue Department. This change involved the removal of a wall, installation of new counters and cabinets, and replacement of the old pneumatic tube system with a new, more efficient one. The Librarian's Office was then created in the stacks, where two other small offices were created as well. In 1898, the Lecture Hall was created in the room originally housing the Newspaper Collection. This involved alterations in the furniture, the installation of a stage and related sound equipment. Other minor changes included removal and addition of galleries in the original Patent Library (then Small Children's Room) and the Patent Room in the west wing.

**7.3.2.1 Puvis de Chavannes Gallery—2nd Floor Staircase Corridor
Pompeiian and Venetian Lobbies**

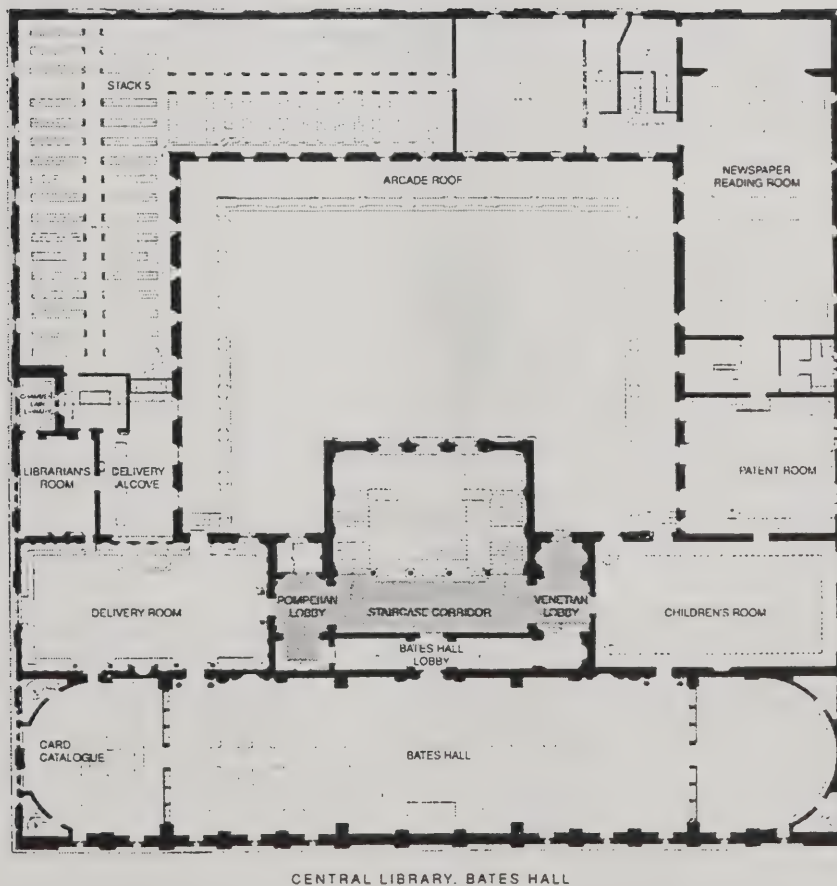
1990s Restoration Room No.
402, 403, 404

Use/Name Changes of Room

1895 to present	Puvis de Chavannes Gallery—2 nd Floor Staircase Corridor Pompeiian and Venetian Lobbies
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Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed in 1895

Physical Description

Architectural Details

At the culmination of the grand stair, the viewer arrives at a corridor where he must turn to enter either the Delivery Room to the right, the Children's Room to the left, or Bates Hall in the center. The corridor completes the journey up the yellow Siena marble Staircase Hall with an arcade of Siena marble Corinthian columns mounted on a low parapet wall of the same yellow marble (fig. I-27). The floor and wainscot were originally of white Istrian marble with patterns of yellow Verona in which large visible fossil shells could be seen.²²⁹ The walls and ceiling were of plaster. The large rear wall of the corridor was covered with Puvis de Chavannes' mural, *Les Muses Inspiratrices Acclament Le Genie Messager de Luminaire* painted on canvas and mounted to the wall.

Jordy criticized the design of the staircase corridor in contrast to the Grand Staircase Hall:

Having traversed the path from the portal through the entrance hall, and up the stairs with uncommon ease for such a monumental scheme, the viewer's trouble begins. There is no climax at the head of the stairs, either spatially or functionally. The corridor fronting Bates Hall is too tight to direct us unerringly to McKim's climax. The formal symmetry of the plan tells us where we should go; but the space does not make it sufficiently comfortable to head unquestioningly to the destination for which the architects planned.²³⁰

The vaulted plaster ceiling springs from the columns of the arcade and from corbel on the opposite wall. Puvis' large mural is the focal point of the corridor. It dictated the decoration of the ceiling and end walls for which there was much deliberation before a final decorative scheme was adopted. There was concern over the effect that the color of the ceiling and end walls would have on the mural. Although, at first, the ceiling was "tinted" by a Mr. Koos, Chavannes' "trusted collaborator,"²³¹ these spaces were eventually entrusted to Elmer Garnsey, who had painted the ground floor corridors. It is likely that the first tinting of the ceiling was a temporary measure to alleviate the contrast between the white plaster and the soft tones of Puvis' mural. A letter from G. E. Wolters, Superintendent at the Library, to McKim suggested this.

The tint that Mr. Koos will put on the ceiling is the same which Mr. P. de Chavannes used as a background for the painting, when on exhibition; it is a purplish yellow, which evidently will harmonize quite well with the color of the ceiling of the staircase. Mr. Koos will finish Monday morning and if you have no objection, I will be over there and arrange at once for the tinting of the ceiling according to his instructions ... the present white color [of the ceiling] contrasts harshly with the painting.²³²

An entry in the Trustees minutes on October 15, 1895, indicates that the authorization was given to paint the ceiling.²³³ The next year, correspondence between Elmer Garnsey, Frederick Hill, and McKim suggest that repainting was done. On December 15, 1896, Hill wrote to McKim:

Mr. Garnsey and I have been going into the matter of the ceiling and end walls as carefully and thoroughly as possible before the work is actually done. As regards the ceiling I think we are starting in perfectly safe lines, but as regards the end walls there seems to be more to be said. The necessity of the side panels (paintings) being “tied in” with the large painting seems to grow. It would be wrong as well as useless, to try to paint some special thing there, but we both think that there is a safe compromise,—namely, of painting in a sketchy (pardon the word) way, “*irrdure*,” somewhat of the character of those in the large painting, the ones over the upper left hand corner of the door leading to Bates Hall— These are scarcely more than indicated and our idea is to make it a treatment of color rather than of form, the arrangement of the mass being the particular thing—This I have very carefully considered and am firmly convinced would be a good and satisfactory way of treating the end walls and would not be invading M. de Chavannes’ province which should not be thought of for a moment, naturally.²³⁴

Garnsey also wrote the following to McKim about the proposed scheme:

I venture to suggest that the wall spaces on either side the large Chavannes decoration at the ends of the hall, may be brought into relation with the marble and M. Chavannes’ compositions by painting in grey tones suggestions of his laurel thickets, which occur on either side the door leading into Bates Hall.

These would not be attempts to “complete” or to “carry around” this scheme in any way but would simply be modifications of the grey ground which must be supplied in these spaces. The enclosed sketch may explain my notion better, and I trust you will kindly let me know if you approve the suggestion.²³⁵

Garnsey’s suggestions were approved and he was paid \$1,000 for painting the ceiling and end walls in January 1897.²³⁶ Now the ceiling and walls appear to be similar to what he described in his letter. The ceiling is painted in mottled tones of tan. Around the edge of each ceiling there is a trim of green laurel branches like the foliage in the mural itself. A wreath of laurel branches adorns the middle of each ceiling bay as well. The side walls surrounding the marble door arches are treated like the ceiling but in a darker color scheme, similar to the colors of the top register of Puvis’ large mural.

Fixtures and Furnishings

Originally, there was a small ceiling fixture installed in each ceiling bay.

Artwork: Puvis de Chavannes Murals

Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, widely known for his mural decorations at the Hotel de Ville, the Sorbonne, and the Pantheon in Paris, was contracted by the Trustees on May 25, 1893, to paint the rear wall and eight panels of the Grand Staircase Hall for the sum of 250,000 francs.²³⁷ Although the Trustees' intention was to include only American painters in the decorative scheme of the Library building, an exception was made for Puvis, described as "almost if not quite the most distinguished of living French painters."²³⁸ In his contemporary account, Herbert Walker explained the justification for Puvis' commission:

There has been regret expressed that a foreign artist should have been given this commission while there are able Americans, but the fact remains that very few, if any, American painters have been trained, or had the opportunity to be trained, in decorative work of this character, and while the last decade has shown that there are men amongst their ranks who have strong decorative sense and would be capable of much excellent mural work, the importance of these panels warranted the trustees in selecting an artist who it is acknowledged is one of the greatest decorative painters of the century.²³⁹

Working from his studio in France, and having never seen the Library building, Puvis was provided with a model, photographs, and dimensions of the stairhall and corridor, as well as samples of the yellow Siena marble that lined the walls. So that he could be sure the panels would look right once installed in the building, Puvis reportedly painted them and framed them into a mock wooden arch imitating the marble arches in the building in color and design.²⁴⁰

The large rear wall mural was installed in the end of 1895 followed by the eight stairhall panels one year later. There were some problems encountered when installing the large mural. A letter from Wolters to McKim related that air blisters formed in areas between the canvas and the wall. To remedy this, small cuts were made in the canvas and putty was inserted into the voids. He explained why this condition occurred:

The reason for this trouble, which did not occur to any extent in the mounting of the other paintings, was attributed by the men employed, to the fact, that Mr. Chavannes' canvasses were not painted on the back, as those of Messrs. Sargent and Abbey.

The dry canvass [sic] absorbed part of the oil in the white lead putty [mounting material], thus drying it too quick and preventing it from adhering tightly to wall and canvass.²⁴¹

For his subject matter, Puvis chose the appropriate theme of the branches of human knowledge. The large rear panel, entitled *Les Muses Inspiratrices Acclament Le Genie Messager de Lumiere*, or *The Muses Welcoming the Genius of Enlightenment*, is primarily painted in soft blues, greens and tans with silvery-white outfitted muses in the foreground. The

20-foot high by 40-foot long composition is of the nine muses welcoming the Genius of Enlightenment atop the summit of a hill covered with green grass and heather. A horizontal band of blue sea runs across the mural above the green hill. The Genius of Enlightenment, represented by a naked boy, is in the center of the composition directly over the door to Bates Hall. With wings outstretched, he holds rays of light over his head. The nine muses approach him on either side of the doorway. The 1978 Library handbook said that this composition “uplifts the imagination with a breadth and grandeur that sets the aspirational theme of the Library’s program.”²⁴²

The Staircase Hall panels represent the subdivisions of letters and science. The color scheme of the panels is the same as that of the large mural—mainly blues, greens, and neutral whites. A brief description of each panel follows:

Philosophy: Plato and a disciple stand in the foreground of a garden in Athens. In the distance the Acropolis and Parthenon command the painting.

Astronomy: Scantily clad Chaldean shepherds stand on a rocky parapet observing the shining stars above. Behind them is a tent from which a woman peers.

History: A woman, history personified, stands upon the steps of a ruined temple with uplifted hand to unfold the secrets of the past. A naked youth bearing a book and torch of science is next to her.

Chemistry: A fairy with a wand stands in a rocky recess. A spirit carries a geological hammer and stands among rare minerals which he has broken up for a mineral chemistry experiment. A decaying skeleton of a beast rests in a hollow in the ground.

Physics: A woman typifying good news touches an electrical wire with one hand and holds up a branch of laurel with the other showing electrical connection and victory. Her sister, dressed in a gloomy robe passes through the air rapidly behind her.

Pastoral Poetry: Virgil stands in front of a clump of slender trees in a landscape of beauty. Two shepherds stand in the distance behind him.

Dramatic Poetry: Aeschylus sits upon the edge of a cliff overlooking the sea. In the distance, a rock rises from the water upon which a scene from the play Prometheus Bound is occurring. Prometheus lies shackled upon the rock naked and being eaten by a vulture who circles above. Oceanides rising from the water float about in the air.

Epic Poetry: Homer is seated upon a stone by the roadside with a staff and lyre laid beside him on the ground. Two female figures personify Iliad and Odyssey—the former wears a helmet and carries a spear and the latter has an oar.²⁴³

McKim was highly impressed with the murals. In a letter to John Singer Sargent, McKim expressed his satisfaction:

The Chavannes work is superb in its stately proportions and high ideals carried out with a breadth that easily makes him a master of his art. The public have hailed it by common acclaim. He has made it his staircase rather than that of McKim, Mead & White and I am sure that it cannot fail to deeply impress you.²⁴⁴

Modern interpretations of the work are mixed, however. While critical of the murals, Whitehill liked the architecture.

These allegories of L'Esprit humain, executed in the pale blues, the greens and the white, dear to their creator in a *neo-Grec* mood that still recalls the pre-Raphaelites, carry less conviction than the architecture, or the marvelously selected panels, the columns, and the pilasters of Siena marble.²⁴⁵

In contrast, Jordy commended the murals despite his criticism of the architecture. He wrote, “Puvis’s work ranks among the outstanding examples of mural decoration in the country [U. S.], the distraction of McKim’s frame notwithstanding.”²⁴⁶

Library Alterations to 1909

In 1902 Fox & Gale reported that there was possibly heat damage on the “Philosophy” panel in the Staircase Hall. This matter was referred to the City of Boston Committee on Art. According to an article in the *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, this panel had a history of structural problems as well.

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

The 1929 Trustees’ Annual Report says that the murals were cleaned that year. An article written by conservators from the Straus Center for Conservation at the Fogg Art Museum relates that the first documented conservation of the murals was in 1930 by Charles Durham. The Fogg report states that in Durham’s restoration, a protective surface of egg whites combined with other ingredients was applied giving the paintings a “slight gloss.”²⁴⁷ In 1933 the Examining Committee reported that the murals needed attention again.²⁴⁸ In 1940, L. Arcadius Lyon cleaned the murals with a solution of castile soap and water. The egg white coating had an unsatisfactory response to this treatment. He chose not to continue with stronger cleaning methods for fear of damaging the paint layers. Finally, an undocumented restoration was done in 1953 by Finlayson Brothers.²⁴⁹

As part of the current restoration program, the murals were conserved again in 1994. They were reportedly in good condition requiring only surface cleaning, consolidation of minor flaking, and retouching of minor abrasions. However, an accidental steam valve release during the beginning of the restoration caused greater damage on the large mural and necessitated immediate action. The condensed steam on the painting caused lifting and tenting of the paint layers, blanching and the development of dark stains over the surface, and detachment of small areas of canvas from the wall.²⁵⁰

The paint was consolidated with BEVA 371 followed by reattachment using Willard heated spatulas. A xylene/water emulsion was then applied to remove the excess BEVA 371 adhesive, and both were lifted from the paint surface with cotton wads. Finally, the painted surface was rinsed with benzine and cotton wads.

After the emergency consolidation was done, cleaning was undertaken. An innovative solution created by Richard Wolbers was used for lack of any others producing acceptable results. The solution was a citrate and detergent gel brushed onto the mural and worked over the surface before being removed with large cotton wads. Sometimes several applications were necessary to remove all surface soiling. After all cleaning was done, the mural was rinsed with water and petroleum benzine.²⁵¹ The eight panels in the Staircase Hall were cleaned in the same manner as the large mural.

In 1954, two new lighting fixtures (“luminaire”) designed by Rambusch Decorating Company of New York were installed as part of the modernization campaign (see 1978 *Handbook* photos). These fixtures were hung in the end bays of the corridor and one in each end lobby as well. A matching, but larger, luminaire was hung from the middle of the Stairhall ceiling.

In 1972 the floor of the staircase corridor was redone “in close conformance with the original specifications.” The marbles installed are in the same pattern as was originally laid, but now are yellow Verona, Botticino (gray), Aldorado (dark gray), and Chiampo Perlato (reddish gray).²⁵²

Pompeian and Venetian Lobbies (402, 404)

McKim designed a small lobby or foyer on either end of the Chavannes Gallery. Each was decorated individually and given a name corresponding to the decoration. The Venetian Lobby was on the north end of the hall, serving as a foyer for the Children’s Room, and the Pompeian Lobby was on the south end leading to the Delivery Room. Neither of these spaces was altered throughout the history of the Library.

Venetian Lobby

The Venetian Lobby was a square, cross vaulted space with an alcove looking into the courtyard (fig. I-28). The walls, ceiling, and lunettes were decorated by Joseph Lindon Smith in a Venetian theme. The main design of this composition is the lunette over the window looking into the court. This lunette features Venice personified as a young woman giving Adriatic, a young man, a marriage ring. Saint Theodore, the patron saint of the Venetians, kneels to their left. The composition was done in greens and blues, and the ceiling and parts of the walls were also gilded. Other Venetian themes are found in the composition as well. Over the door to the Children's Room is a block of stone on which is carved the lion of St. Mark, the patron saint of Venice. In the frieze of the dome, there are ships and the shields bearing the names of cities conquered by Venice.

Pompeiian Lobby

The Pompeiian Lobby was also a square, groin vaulted space. On its west was the elevator well, and on the east was an alcove with a drinking fountain in a niche. Against the side walls of this alcove were oak settees, and over one was a window looking into the Bates Hall vestibule. Elmer Garnsey carried out the painting here perhaps continuing the Pompeiian design of the Ground Floor corridors he also painted. This was reportedly the only painting that was done directly on the plaster walls rather than on canvas. The main color was Pompeiian red with slate gray and yellow. The ceiling is light gray and blue. On the walls Garnsey painted bunches of hyacinths and Pompeiian motifs. On the south wall of the alcove was a panel containing Bacchus pouring wine into a cup—an image symbolizing “knowledge flowing from the divine source to the mind of man.”²⁵³

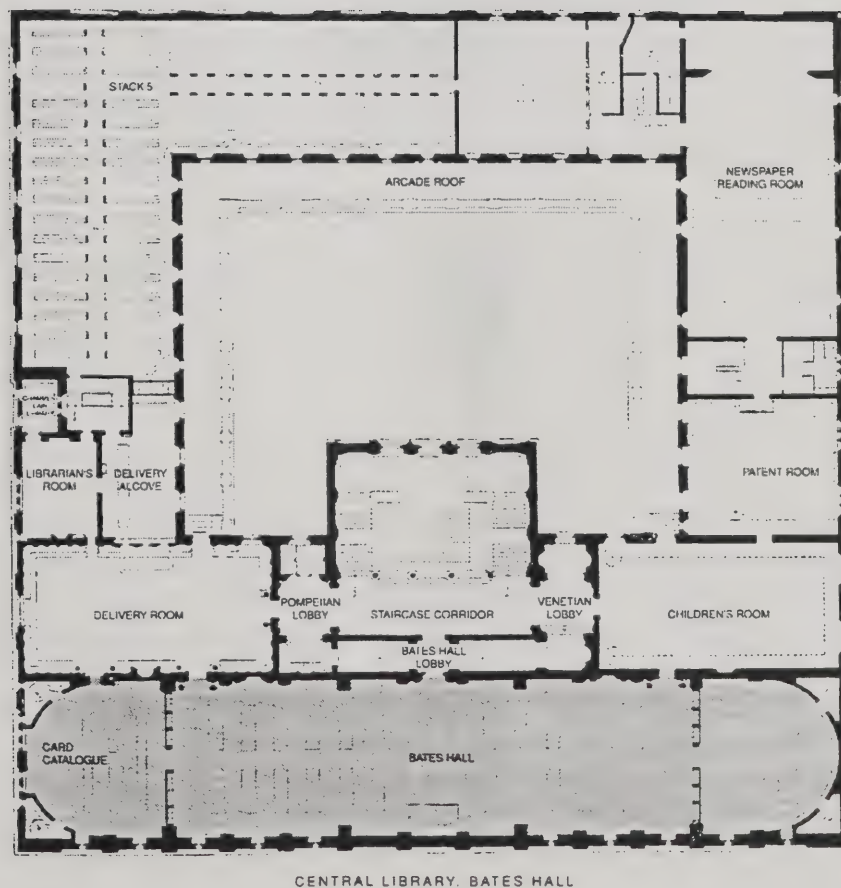
7.3.2.2 Bates Hall

1990s Restoration Room No.
405

Use/Name Changes of Room
1895 to present Bates Hall

Plan as built in 1895

N→



INTRODUCTION

Because Bates Hall is such a large and important space in the McKim Building, this section of the report is treated differently than the rest. More detailed information is presented, and the format of the section has been modified to suit this information. For purposes of clarity, within each time period discussion, architectural elements have been separated into sections.

Bates Hall, the grand public reading room in the Library, is located on the second floor of the McKim Building and occupies the full length of the east side of the second, third, and fourth floors. Bates Hall is entered through a small vestibule from the 2nd Floor Staircase Corridor. Ornately carved oak doors, located in the center on the west wall, provide access into Bates Hall from the vestibule. There are two other doors in the west wall of the reading room. The south door in the west wall leads into the Delivery Room (a.k.a. Abbey Room); the north door in the west wall leads into the original the Children's Room.

McKim designed Bates Hall to be a monumental architectural space. Its design is derived from the large *piano nobile* reading room in Henri Labrouste's Bibliotheque Sainte Genevieve in Paris.²⁵⁴ McKim's early rendering of Bates Hall is without furnishings or books, but shows patrons enjoying the space with its ornately carved cornice and murals. This selection of what to illustrate reveals that his ritualistic interpretation of the design of the reading room originally superseded its functional design (see Appendix 11.3).

Bates Hall is 218-feet long, 42 1/2-feet wide, and 50-feet to the crown of its arches. The ends of the Hall are semi-circular in shape. The monumental character of Bates Hall is created by its three-story arched ceiling constructed of molded plaster and by the arcade of windows that line the east wall. The window arcade is repeated in blind arches along the west wall of the room.

The primary interior finishes in Bates Hall are stone and plaster. The floor is covered with terrazzo, crossed by paths of marble. A red Verona marble base surrounds the room. The walls are finished with a light gray-tan sandstone, quarried in Amherst, Ohio. The main entrance into Bates Hall is framed by an ornately carved surround of Indiana limestone; the door surrounds into the Delivery Room and Children's Room are constructed with black Belgian marble and Alps green serpentine marble.

The panel at the north end of Bates Hall is painted plaster and was intended to receive a painting by James A. McNeill Whistler that was never executed. The arches in the west wall are plaster and were also intended for murals that were never completed. The small panels below the recessed arches are also plaster. They were originally tinted blue and

not intended to receive decorative painting. The ceiling in Bates Hall is dominated by its four monumental spanning arches. The surfaces of the arches are finished with molded plaster and the recessed panels between the arches are coffered. The ceiling is decoratively painted (figs. I-29, I-30).

Bates Hall furnishings were designed by McKim and constructed by the firm of Mellish, Byfield & Company. The furnishings are of oak and include bookcases along the east, west and north walls of the Hall, bookcases that separate the semi-circular ends of the Hall from the reading room, reading tables, and card catalogue cases. The original chairs for Bates Hall were Windsor style chairs, constructed of hickory and painted black. The hickory chairs have been replaced with oak chairs with a varnished finish.

The library tables in Bates Hall were originally fitted with bronze goose neck lamps with metal shades. Bronze floor lamps with large globes were located around the perimeter of the room, and gooseneck lamps were mounted on the cornice of the oak bookcases. Prior to the 1990s restoration, the original table and bookcase lighting had been replaced with bronze strip lighting, and the floor lamps had been modified and fitted with shades.

As a primary public space in the McKim Building of the Boston Public Library, much effort was expended on the original design of Bates Hall. Study drawings and correspondence shed light on this process. This documentation reveals that Bates Hall's interior decorative scheme was never completed. The unexecuted Whistler painting and the wall murals, integral parts of McKim's original vision for the room, would have ultimately defined the character of the Hall.

The alterations that have been made to Bates Hall in its one hundred year history have been focused on functional needs—improvements in lighting and heating—and redecoration. Prior to restoration, the card catalogue had been moved from the south apse into the Children's Room and the reference desk was no longer located at the center of the room. Nonetheless, the primary form and function of Bates Hall have always been intact.

DESIGN DERIVATION

McKim's design for Bates Hall is derived from the grand *piano nobile* reading room in Henri Labrouste's Bibliothèque Sainte Genevieve in Paris. Like Bates Hall, the reading room in the Bibliothèque Sainte Genevieve is a grand arched space that extends across a full elevation of the building. The exterior walls of both reading rooms also contain an arcade of windows—in Bates Hall there are thirteen windows and in the Bibliothèque Sainte Genevieve there are nineteen windows (figs. I-33, E-6).

McKim's early rendering for Bates Hall shows a grand architectural space, devoid of furnishings, books, and lighting (figs. D-16, H-16). Interestingly, this rendering shows a carved inscription under the arched windows and a painting in the north apse, neither of which were executed in the final design. Review of the other study drawings for Bates Hall at the Boston Public Library and the New York Historical Society indicate that there were several components of Bates Hall whose design had multiple incarnations. Examples of these components include: the plaster ceiling; the bookcases that separated the semi-circular ends of the room from the main reading room; and the door surround for the vestibule entry.

As the design for Bates Hall evolved, it gradually shifted from the "ritualistic" grand architectural space to the more functional library reading room. In this transition, the elaborately carved inscription below the arched windows became a single row of names of famous men above the arched windows. The arch above the center entrance to Bates Hall was constructed with Amherst stone rather than marble. The partitions separating the semicircular ends of the room from the reading room became usable bookcases, rather than decorative screens. In addition, the first floor walls of Bates Hall were lined with bookcases, which negated the need for decorative architectural finishes on these walls. A final unexecuted component of McKim's grand design was the decorative painting in Bates Hall.

Library as Completed 1895

General

The original appearance of Bates Hall is described in detail in Herbert Small's original Handbook of the New Public Library in Boston. There is also good photo documentation for Bates Hall at the time of its construction, including several construction photographs (fig. I-30 to I-33).

Floor

Small described the original terrazzo floor in detail in the 1895 Handbook:

The floor in the hall is terrazzo, crossed by paths of yellow Verona marble. This terrazzo is a sort of rough mosaic, made by strewing small, irregularly shaped pieces of marble upon a layer of Portland cement, rolling the whole together with heavy rollers, and finally polishing with sandstone and oiling. In this particular case the cement was stained yellow with coloring matter, and the marbles used were, for the body of the design, the yellow Sienna and white Italian, and for the borders, the black Belgian.²⁵⁵

An entry in the Trustees' minutes further confirms these flooring materials.

Ordered that the floor of Bates Hall on the new Public Library building consist of panels of terrazzo separated by bands of yellow Verona marble.

Ordered that the President be authorized to sign a special order on Messrs. Bowker Torrey & Co. to purchase the yellow Verona marble for the Bates Hall referred to above for the sum of nine hundred and twenty three dollars (\$923.00).²⁵⁶

Walls

The walls of Bates Hall had a red Verona marble base. The base was 16-feet high and 1 1/4-inches thick. Located in the base were brass heat registers. The registers were 10-feet wide, and 2-feet 5-inches long and divided into four rectangular panels.

Above the red Verona marble base, the wall was finished with a light gray/tan sandstone, quarried in Amherst, Ohio. The individual blocks of stone were 1-foot 7-inches wide and 10-inches thick. Their surface was vertically tooled, except at the projecting edges of the cornerstones. On the projecting edges, the stone was horizontally tooled to a width of 1 1/2-inches. The sandstone was set and pointed with a light gray mortar. The mortar joint is approximately 3/8-inch wide and slightly recessed.

The long walls of Bates Hall were dominated by the projecting piers of the four monumental arches that span the room. Between the projecting piers and separating the windows, classical pilasters supported the ceiling's flat arches. The east wall windows and the west wall blind arches were surrounded by simple, arched projecting sandstone moldings. Above the arched openings was a cornice band in which the names of famous men of the arts, literature, science and philosophy were carved. The carved names were finished with gold leaf.²⁵⁷

The blind arches of the west wall and the north apse panel were finished with plaster. These plaster surfaces were intended to be painted with murals. Although this work was never executed, it seems clear that it was the original design intent for the room. Small wrote the following about the intended paintings:

At the north end there are no windows, but instead a broad panel, surrounded by stone mouldings. It is hoped that some day this panel will be occupied by a painting from the hand of James A. McNeill Whistler, whom many people do not hesitate to call the greatest of contemporary painters. Along the west wall are ten other panels—corresponding in size and position to the windows opposite—which are also to be decorated in time by eminent painters. The architects have already recommended the names of Mr. DeForrest Brush, Mr. Frank D. Millet, and Mr. Abbott Thayer, all of them American artists, as men well fitted to do the next decorations to be placed in the Library, and it is likely that the first commissions would be for these panels. And in Bates Hall, as elsewhere in the

building it is hoped that the generosity of citizens will do much to provide the money for the mural paintings which are necessary to the entire completion of the architectural scheme.²⁵⁸

In the archives of the firm of McKim Mead & White at the New York Historical Society, there is correspondence between the architects and John LaFarge, Abbott Thayer and James McNeill Whistler regarding the painting of the murals. In a letter of February 7, 1889, LaFarge wrote at some length about the paintings that he would like to execute in the panels:

Though I should not wish to consider myself confined to these subjects, still my fancy has dwelt upon some of the following: I should like to see in the great panel at the end such a theme as the history of Alexander's placing the manuscript of Homer in the safety of the golden box taken from the Persian spoils. Not only could I see in this the type of library, but the love of literature emphasized by the circumstances of war, and a sort of general record of the triumph of the more intellectual civilization.

Then I should like to have a plenty of Greece and Rome. Socrates and the Philosophers, Pythagoras consulting the Wisdom of the East, Demosthenes or Cicero defending the cause of intelligence, the vicissitudes of science or study in the world, the death of Archimedes, Pliny in the dangers of Vesuvius, Ovid in exile, the house of Pindar spared, the state of Hypatia, or again, Chiron teaching the heroes, and far away from these the Queen of Sheba going to visit Solomon, the Magi observing the stars, and perhaps some cluster of Chinese or far Oriental history.²⁵⁹

In 1892, McKim sent LaFarge the dimensions of a panel (28-feet 1 1/4-inches by 11-feet 8-inches) which he considered to be the "best panel in the Hall." He said that he was:

... very desirous to proceed with the decorative work of Bates Hall, at least to find out what is going to be done, who is going to do it, and to get an order for the panel somewhere.... In order to accomplish the painting of this panel, I am ready to try and raise \$10,000. Any increase in the amount might kill the whole thing, but I think I might be able to work it up to \$10,000. Please let me know whether you would care to undertake the work at this price and if you would agree to complete it within two years from the receipt of the commission.²⁶⁰

There is also correspondence by Thayer and a pencil sketch of his design for one of the west wall panels. The dates on these letters do not include years, although other dated letters suggest that the correspondence occurred between 1894 and 1895. The first letter from Thayer to McKim, dated December 7, contains the sketch for one panel with a written description of his ideas:

I forgot to say yesterday that the thing I originally wished almost most to show you is a sketch for a Bates Hall panel one of a series I have in my mind. The gods in white and gold on cream white cloud ... a green sky with naked Endymion and the dark haired woman on the purple black steeds with blue wings floating therein. The sky grading down to a yellow horizon [sic] far below them. See Keats...²⁶¹

A painted study by Thayer for a proposed mural for the BPL is part of the collection of the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. It is an oil painting on canvas entitled titled “Minerva in a Chariot.”²⁶²

By June 24, in another letter to McKim, it was clear that this work would not be executed.

Your cordial answer to my first two letters came yesterday, and it gave me much pleasure [sic]. I am not sure however that the degree & kind character of my preference for Bates Hall justify my accepting such an honor. As soon as I realize that neither Boston nor I could afford to give the whole row of panels there the case is a little different. I sympathize entirely with your inclination to keep the beautiful wall clear, and doubt if one or two panels decorated even in a heavenly style would help the ensemble. I pictured in my excitement the whole row of them filled with supernaturally beautiful figure decorations of which some miracle I was to be the author—I mean they were to be so much finer than the things I have already done, that it was somehow a new birth of myself under the influence of the opportunity. I feel that in a short time, a week or two, I should be at some decoration (of course as a gift) for the library, however, whether it be for Bates Hall or one of the other, but I think I must see the rooms some more in the meantime.²⁶³

Subsequently McKim wrote to Thayer about the possibility of getting something into the Library if private money could be found. Thayer wrote back emphatically refusing the offer.

Yours received. You got a wrong impression. I said that I *had* wished to put my thing in the Library—There is no place for it now, and I merely wanted to have you know that I had something for some other art or literature building—I don’t want any of the places that remain in the library ... Of course, I might be tempted by the whole series of Bates Hall panels but not by one or two as I first thought.²⁶⁴

In July of 1895 McKim indicated that he was not offering the Bates Hall spaces to Thayer as Thayer seemingly assumed. McKim stated that the panels in Bates Hall “are too small and wholly unfitted for the Trojan scheme,” proposed by Thayer earlier. McKim was distressed by Thayer’s refusal of other spaces in the Library and persisted in telling Thayer that he would still recommend him to the Trustees when moneys become available for commissions.²⁶⁵

Whistler was supposed to decorate the large panel at the North end of Bates Hall, but the deal went sour after his inactivity. In March 1895, the Trustees voted to inform him that they were withdrawing their proposition for his work.²⁶⁶ In an April 1895 letter to a Trustee, W. Richards, McKim inquired about their intentions with regard to Whistler. He wrote, “It seems absolutely absurd that we should go on waiting for him without a single report of progress on his part in two years.”²⁶⁷ Richards replied:

As for Whistler a vote was passed ten days ago asking the President to inform him that our relations had ceased. We have no letter from him accepting the engagement and there is no contract. Now is the time for taking up Parish and Abbott Thayer...²⁶⁸

On May 7, 1895, Whistler pleaded with the Trustees:

It has long been my intention to write and state formally my acceptance of the proposal to paint the panel offered to me in the Boston Library. Verbally this was quite understood by Mr. McKim and Abbott. It was thoroughly settled that I should have carte blanche both as to time and subject. And as far as remuneration went, I made it clear to those gentlemen that I was willing to receive whatever sum the authorities in council should have at their disposal to apportion according to their judgment of the worth or importance of what I might do for them. I beg therefore now to lay before you gentlemen this my letter renewing, officially, my agreement to this undertaking upon the above terms, as settled with Messieurs McKim and Abbott.²⁶⁹

Although Whistler appears to have had a contractual understanding with the Trustees, he died in 1903 before the decorative painting was finished in the Boston Public Library. Whether or not the Trustees would have ever re-contracted his work is unknown and a moot issue. Whistler's ideas for this mural are recorded, however, on a sketch in the collection of the Print Department of the Boston Public Library. This watercolor and gouache painting was given to the Library in 1950 by Whistler's sister-in-law, Rosalind Birnie-Philips. Its estimated date is 1899–1900.²⁷⁰

Interestingly, Thayer wrote to the McKim in October of 1895, after his candid refusal to paint anything for the Library, asking for the dimensions of the space Whistler intended to paint. He stated that some friends of his were “talking of raising a subscription” for him to do “something in the Library,” and they had heard that Whistler was no longer doing the work in Bates Hall.²⁷¹

The fact that none of the proposed decorative painting in Bates Hall was executed suggests that the Trustees lacked either the funding or the commitment to do the work. It was, however, an issue about which they were later questioned. In 1915, Charles A. Aiken inquired of the Trustees regarding additional mural paintings. The following entry was found in the Trustees' minutes:

A communication was received from Charles A. Aiken regarding further mural decoration of the Library, and the President was directed to reply that the Trustees do not contemplate such decoration.²⁷²

It is unclear whether this inquiry related specifically to Bates Hall, but it seems likely that it did. By 1915 the Bates Hall murals remained the largest area of uncompleted art in the building.

The SPNEA Conservation Center investigated the original colors of the wall panels in Bates Hall in January of 1995. Paint analysis of the plaster panels reported the following about the finishes in the north wall panel and blind arches:

Both of these areas show as their first coatings a sizing on the plaster surface, and a relatively thick white layer, probably based on its auto-luminescence in ultraviolet light, a white lead. Over the white we find a thin layer whose solubility in alcohol, whose fluorescence in UV light, and whose positive reaction to a TTC (triphenol tetrazolium chloride) stain as seen in UV light show it to be a natural resin. It seems likely that these layers were applied in expectation of the artwork. It seems very clear that it is the next layers which were the first finish treatments.

The original field color on the north apse wall was a tan. It was enframed by the same pattern of borders we see today, with an outer surrounding stripe and another stripe running parallel to it just into the field. The earlier field stripe was placed similarly to the present one, but was a bit narrower. Its color was gray green.

In the spot we examined, both the original and the present outermost gray green stripe were very close to 3 1/2 inches wide. The present field stripe runs about 5 1/8 inches from the outer frame while the original one ran about 5 1/4 inches. The inner edge of both inner field stripes is placed about 6 1/2 inches from the frame.

On the blind wall arches of the west wall we see a similar pattern of layering, with the lead white and resin layers described above followed by a tan, the first finish paint layer. This color exactly matches the apse field tan.²⁷³

Below the blind arches on the west wall are textured plaster panels. Small described these panels as follows:

Above the bookcases, as well as over the wainscoting at the south end, is a belt of plaster—regularly interrupted by the piers—tinted robin's egg blue. The visitor will notice the curious grain of this belt, which was obtained by the pressure of a bull's hide.²⁷⁴

The Trustees' minutes indicated that these panels were fabricated and painted by Elmer Garnsey, who also painted several other locations in the building.²⁷⁵ SPNEA paint analysis of these panels stated the following:

... This layer (the blue tinted plaster) is very clear in cross section as well as in the macro (full sized) sample. Over it is an interesting dark greenish glaze with three finish layers above.

We see in cross section B that there is no clear break line or dirt between the blue and the glaze. This condition could result either from the two coats being applied in a single campaign, or from the glaze being applied subsequently but not too long after the blue. If we believe the testimony of the *Handbook*, the glaze is not original. Perhaps the blue was intended to accompany the artwork. It would then be possible that the glaze was added after it became apparent that the murals would not materialize. If so, the proper treatment to accompany the first finish tan on the apse wall would be the blue with its dark green glaze. When we compare the color of the glazed blue with the apse and wall arch field and banding colors, it seems especially plausible that it is the glazed appearance which should be duplicated in the upcoming work.²⁷⁶

Ceiling

The ceiling in Bates Hall was constructed of molded plaster. There are a number of study drawings for the ceiling, and several mock-ups were done before its full construction was undertaken (fig. I-29). On the drawings it is referred to as a papier mache ceiling. However, the ceiling was originally built with plaster.

The Bates Hall ceiling consists of four principal projecting arches that rise from the projecting wall piers. Between the projecting arches are pairs of arches that spring from the wall pilasters. These arches, although also projecting, have a shallower profile. The faces of the principal arches are decorated with a Greek key pattern; the faces of the other ceiling arches are decorated with an interconnected curvilinear pattern. Located between the arches is a coffered ceiling. The coffers are of alternating square and rectangular shapes. Located in the center of the square coffers is a molded plaster flower. The sides of the coffers are formed by multiple decorative plaster moldings (fig. CI-18).

The ends of the Bates Hall ceiling are half-dome coffered ceilings. Interestingly the patterns of the arches of the domes are not identical. In the south apse, the placement of the arches is aligned with the windows beneath; in the north apse they are evenly spaced around the dome (fig. CI-17).

The ceiling of Bates Hall has always been painted. Small said the ceiling was “tinted a cream color and a delicate green.”²⁷⁷ In an article written at about the same time, Elmer Garnsey, however, said the ceiling “has been finished in a quiet color scheme of ivory and blue.”²⁷⁸ SPNEA paint analysis of the ceiling revealed that the color was actually more blue than green. It stated the following about the ceiling’s original paint colors:

In Bates Hall no original painted surfaces survive unrepainted. The great barrel vault has been repainted twice. The present color, almost a faux stone in effect, nearly duplicates a similar color below it. This earlier “stone” color painted out the original predominating vault color, an ivory...

We can also confirm the presence of three finish treatments on the barrel vault from cross sections of the presently blue coffer fields. It is clear that these areas have been painted blue three times...²⁷⁹

Windows

The windows in Bates Hall are located in the east and south walls. On the east wall, there are thirteen large arched windows that form the arcade that faces onto Copley Square. Two additional arched windows are located in the south wall. The arched windows contain wooden sash, set in wooden casings. The sash are fixed, with the exception of the center panel of the lower sash which opens into the room.

The windows have divided lights formed by square principle muntins that are divided into eight triangular panes by a muntin of smaller profile. Small described the windows as “filled with wooden grilles of the conventional Roman pattern, painted green—a substitute for the originally intended bronze.”²⁸⁰ SPNEA’s analysis of the paint on the windows states “... that base layers of an off-white and a tan were built up before a quite thin gray green finish layer was applied.”²⁸¹

Underneath the arched windows, between the bookcases, are small, single casement windows. The only exception occurs on the south elevation, where there are pairs rather than single windows under the arched windows. The original finish on these windows was a painted faux finish of wood graining which matched the finish on the bookcases.²⁸²

The Baldwin Coolidge photograph of the south apse shows the windows in the apse with window shades, mounted below the arched panels. The early photographs of the Hall indicate that only the south apse windows were fitted with shades. The shades appear to be a dark color, probably dark green (fig. I-39).

Doors

The principal entry door into Bates Hall, from the Grand Stair Hall, is located at the center of the west wall. Passage from the Grand Stair Hall into Bates Hall is through a small vestibule. The vestibule creates an intimate and enclosing space that accentuates the grandeur of the patrons’ arrival in Bates Hall. Small described the vestibule as follows:

The little vestibule through which one passes into is itself a triumph—on however small a scale—of beauty and restfulness. It is mainly of Echaillon marble, the same as that used for the stairs, with a floor of yellow Verona and Istrian marbles. Over the side-doors, and in the center of the paneled ceiling are laurel wreaths. The heavy doors into the hall are oak, deeply carved, and the doorways into the corridor and the private staircases leading away to the right and left to the rooms of the mezzanine story, contain beautiful gates of old Italian workmanship—in two patterns, it will be noticed—bought for the Library in Venice.²⁸³

The entrance door surround and balcony above are constructed of carved Indiana limestone (figs. I-38, D-17). The balcony has a classical style balustrade and is supported by ornate carved brackets. A door on the balcony leads to a landing of the long stair leading from the Second Floor to the Special Library Floor. The balcony is framed by a sandstone arch, which mirrors the blind arches of the west wall. In this arch, above the balcony door, is a carved sandstone hemisphere, circled by a band with the signs of the Zodiac. The entry doors are ornately carved, double oak doors.

The two doors located at the north and south ends of the west wall of the reading room are identical in design. Their surrounds are constructed with Corinthian columns of black Belgian serpentine marble with bronze capitals (fig. I-35). The columns support a heavy architrave and cornice also constructed of the black serpentine marble. On top of the cornice is a black marble pedestal, flanked by scrolls. Small says that this pedestal was to hold a white bust, which shows in some of the early photographs of the room. However, in most photographs the pedestal is empty. Small said of these door surrounds:

They offer a strong contrast—a contrast hardly harmonious—to the quiet color-scheme of the rest of the room. Each cornice, however, is intended to be the pedestal of a white marble bust, and when these busts are in position (as they are not at the present writing) the contrast will be somewhat toned away.²⁸⁴

The doors of these entries were originally double wooden doors, covered with a tan pigskin. Each door had an oval window and brass hand and kick plates. The leather was installed with decorative brass nails. Above the doors were fixed wooden panels that were also covered with pigskin.

Besides these three public entrances, there are three doors in the south apse and one door in the north apse that lead to the small adjacent service rooms. Small described their function in 1895 as follows:

... there are, at the south end, a smaller door leading more directly from the Catalogue to the Delivery Room, and two doorways leading through the wainscoting, one to the Catalogue Room down-stairs, and the other to the special libraries on the floor above. At the north end is another doorway, leading through the bookcases to an elevator, used for bringing up the heavy volumes of periodical shelves in the Periodical Room.²⁸⁵

The south apse doorway leading into the Delivery Room contains double wooden doors with oval windows, covered with tan pigskin. The other apse doors are oak panel doors. The apse doors are surrounded by the wood frames of the bookcases and wall paneling.

Mantelpieces

Located on the west wall, between the center and north and south entrances are two fireplaces. The fireplaces have sandstone mantelpieces and are faced with the same red Verona marble as was used for the wall base. The fireboxes are constructed with tan brick. The fireplaces have flues that suggest that they are operable, although there is no evidence to suggest their recent use (fig. CI-15).

Bookcases

The bookcases in Bates Hall were designed by McKim and constructed by the firm of Mellish, Byfield & Company. There are two types of bookcases—the built-in cases that line the east, west and north walls, and the free-standing cases that separated the north and south apses from the reading room (fig. I-37). Originally, there were no bookcases lining the south apse. This wall was covered with oak wainscoting, in front of which stood the card catalogue cases.

McKim's drawings for the wall bookcases are in the archives of the Boston Public Library.²⁸⁶ The bookcases are constructed of oak and were manufactured by Mellish, Byfield & Company. The wall bookcases fit between the sandstone wall piers; their lower shelf sits upon the red Verona marble base. Each case has six recessed panels framed by moldings at its back. Its cornice has a bolection molding, on which pairs of gooseneck lamps were originally mounted. Within each case, there are three vertical divisions and three shelves of adjustable height.

Bookcases at the ends of the reading room are of similar construction, but have carved vertical panels separating the sections of the bookcases.

Free-standing Furniture

The early photographs of Bates Hall show the reading room and north apse furnished with tables and chairs (fig. I-32). The south apse housed the card catalogue (figs. I-39, I-40). Small said the following about the furnishings:

Bates Hall accommodates from two hundred and fifty to three hundred readers. There are thirty-three heavy tables of American oak, twelve feet long, and three and a half broad, supported on handsome claw-foot standards. Each table is provided with eight chairs, although at least two more to the table could be added without any appreciable discomfort. The chairs are of hickory and painted black, and are patterned after a familiar old-fashioned model.²⁸⁷

McKim's attention to detail was clear in that Bates Hall also had wastebaskets with claw footed feet similar to those of the tables (fig. I-34).

Small described the card catalogue in the south apse as follows:

At the south end is the card catalogue, with eight hundred thousand cards contained in the drawers of thirteen handsome oak cabinets ... The cards are secured in the drawers by means of brass rods, which pass through them, and the drawers are intentionally made small in order that they may be taken out and consulted on the low tables provided for this purpose ...²⁸⁸

Lighting Fixtures

The original lighting fixtures in Bates Hall consisted of pairs of double gooseneck lamps on each of the reading tables. The lamps were made of bronze and appear to have had a dark colored, glass shade (probably dark green). Floor lamps were also located around the perimeter of the room. These lamps, which were made of wrought iron and bronze, had a tripod base with curved legs and were fitted with a large white center globe surrounded by six exposed light bulbs.

Physical and historical evidence indicates that at some point chandeliers were to be hung from the barrel vaulted ceiling in Bates Hall. There are three circular openings in the ceiling which may have been for brass rings meant to hold up chandeliers. In addition, a letter from Wolters to McKim, dated March 30, 1894, mentions the chandeliers. He writes, “The standards in Bates Hall have been set and lighted. The light is good, but not strong enough and the chandeliers could make it right.”²⁸⁹ Nonetheless, no drawing or photo has been found to indicate that these chandeliers ever existed.

Library Alterations

Bates Hall has been minimally altered in the one hundred years since it opened its doors to the public. The alterations that have been made to the Hall fall into two broad categories. The first category is the changes that have been made to accommodate evolving use requirements for the space; the second category is maintenance and redecorating. In the first category falls the construction of the reference desk in the center of the room in 1931 and the moving of the card catalogue from the south apse in the 1960s. In the second category falls the replacement of the terrazzo floor in 1931; the installation of new lighting fixtures in 1947 and 1958; the repainting of the ceiling and wall panels in 1931 and 1960; and the repairs and partial replacement of the heating system in 1962.

Library Alterations to 1909

Entries in the Trustees’ minutes and changes noted in the early photographs reveal that part of the finishing (early alteration) of Bates Hall was driven by the comfort levels and use requirements of the Library patrons. As early as 1901, the Trustees voted to add additional heat to Bates Hall.

The Vice President reported that on August 2, under the authority of the vote of June 28, he signed a contract with Walworth Construction and Supply Company for providing additional heating in Bates Hall, for the sum of forty-two hundred dollars.²⁹⁰

An entry in the Trustees' minutes noted the authorization of the purchase of a rubber floor mat for the terrazzo floor during this period.

On the motion of Mr. Benton, the Librarian was authorized to order a rubber mat for Bates Hall in accordance with his recommendation, at a cost not to exceed four hundred and forty-five and 42/100 dollars.²⁹¹

This entry indicates that Bates Hall has had a rubber mat covering the center aisle of the Hall marble since as early as 1900. Its early installation suggests that the mat was installed to reduce the noise levels in the Hall rather than to reduce wear to the marble in areas of heavy traffic.

The Trustees' minutes reveal that the card catalogue grew quickly. In 1901 an additional case was purchased. The Trustees specified that it was to be "one English oak catalogue case for Bates Hall, at a cost not to exceed three hundred fifty three and 50/100 dollars."²⁹²

Later that year additional work was done in the Card Catalogue Room.

The Librarian submitted a request for the alterations and enlargement of the Bates Hall catalogue station desk, together with plan and estimate of cost; and upon the motion of Mr. Benton, it was voted that the recommendation be approved ... and voted, that the president be authorized to execute a contract for the work with the Mellish, Byfield Company at a cost not exceeding four hundred and fifty-five dollars.²⁹³

Light levels appear to have been a problem in Bates Hall from the time of its construction, as evidenced by additional lighting that appears in the early photographs of the room. By 1900, when the clocks were added to the partitions separating the north and south apses, globe lamps had been added to the partition bookcases. At about this same time, gooseneck lamps were also mounted on the cornices of the oak bookcases around the perimeter of the room and on the partition bookcases (fig. I-36).

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

During the early years there were also some furniture changes. Tables were added to and removed from the reading room. Additional card catalogue cases were installed; and at some point, at least by 1931, the catalogue cases were changed from cases placed along the south wall to free standing cases in the center of the space.

In 1931, Bates Hall received its most comprehensive alterations. The architects for this work were Fox & Gale of Boston, a firm that had been doing work at the Library as early as 1900. The 1931 work included replacing the terrazzo floor, the addition of new tables

and card cases in the Card Catalogue Room; the addition of the reference desk at the center of the west side of Bates Hall and; the repainting of the ceiling and wall panels. The drawings and specifications for this work are in the BPL archives.²⁹⁴ As drawn and specified, the terrazzo floor work included the replacement of the terrazzo border and field and the marble aisles. The yellow Verona marble border of the original floor was retained. The terrazzo floor in Bates Hall was less than 40 years old, which was well within its life expectancy. The reason for its replacement was not wear, but rather the accommodation of new electrical wiring and the installation of the pneumatic tubes for the book retrieval system. In the existing floor, yellow Verona marble frames the perimeter of the hall; while the paths that cross the hall are constructed with 10-inch buff colored marble squares.

The installation of the reference desk in the reading room of Bates Hall was the first major use change for the room. Originally the exclusive domain for quiet reading, the reading room now began to function as service space as well. The placement of the reference desk was studied prior to its installation. One location that was not chosen was abutting the east wall at the center of the Hall. The desk's final location, directly in front of the vestibule into Bates Hall from the Grand Stair, significantly altered the patrons' entry into the grand room. Rather than looking up at the great vaulted ceiling, their attention was now directed towards getting around the reference desk (fig. I-42).²⁹⁵

The building of the reference desk required that several tables be removed from Bates Hall. The reference desk was built on a wooden platform. Its base was faced with red Verona marble, like the walls of the Hall, and it was constructed of oak. Across from the reference desk, in front of the east wall was a private desk. The new furniture in the card catalogue room seems to have been designed to accommodate the increased growth of the Library's holdings. The new furniture included tables, desks, and card cases. As noted above, at least by 1931, the original card cases that lined the south wall had been abandoned and replaced with free-standing cases.²⁹⁶

The 1931 painting of the wall panels and ceiling represents the repainting of the ceiling for the first time. As confirmed in the SPNEA report, this repainting effort attempted to match the original ceiling colors. It is also interesting to note that the stonework in Bates Hall was cleaned as part of this contract.²⁹⁷

The next well-documented change to Bates Hall was the replacement of the table lamps in 1947. The architects for this work were Ames, Child & Graves of Boston. The pairs of double neck gooseneck lamps were replaced with a single bronze strip lamp that extended the full length of the reading tables.²⁹⁸ In 1953 the uses of the room changed somewhat. Although Bates Hall continued to house the General Reference Department

in the central portion, the southern end housed the Literature and Languages Department and the northern end housed the History Department.³⁰⁰

Lighting was also a major component of the work undertaken in Bates Hall in 1958. The architects for this project were Ames & Graves.³⁰⁰ The 1958 work included: the upgrading of the 1947 table lamps; the removal of the gooseneck lamps and installation of bronze strip lights on the bookcases around the perimeter of the room; the installation of new lamps on the card catalogue and reference desks; and the remodeling of the floor lamps. A significant visual change in the design of the floor lamps was the addition of the lampshades (fig. I-42).

Other work undertaken in 1958 included the repainting of the ceiling and the refinishing of the wood trim and furniture in Bates Hall. The window curtains were also added as part of this work. The contract calls for the replacement of the shades in the south apse windows. However, the hanging of the curtains appears to have precluded their installation. The stipulation in the contract that the existing shades be removed suggests that there were shades in the south apse windows from the original furnishing of Bates Hall until 1958.³⁰¹

A photograph of Bates Hall taken after the 1958 work was completed, shows that the private desk in front of the reference desk has been replaced with benches with a high frame at their back. No documentation has been found identifying this as 1958 work, although it appears to be of this vintage (fig. I-43).

The final documented changes in Bates Hall were undertaken in 1962.³⁰² Again Ames & Graves were the architects for this work. It included the installation of new heating pipes and radiators along the east wall of Bates Hall and the installation of the glass doors in the west wall. New glass doors were installed in the doorways from the south apse into the Abbey Room, from the Reading Room into the Abbey Room, and from the reading room into the existing Card Catalogue Room (formerly the Children's Room). This work may have been done in conjunction with the moving of the card catalogue from the south apse and the subsequent refurnishing of that space which occurred in 1961. (See Delivery Room section).

Between 1960 and the 1990s restoration, no major redecorating had been done in Bates Hall. Minor changes were made, such as replacing the floor mat, adding new chairs in the reading room, and adding supplementary light—floodlights on the floor lamps. These alterations only detracted from the historic character of the Hall, and combined with Bates Hall's dirty, deteriorated finishes and poorly functioning mechanical systems, transformed McKim's grand architectural space into a dark and gloomy space where patrons' overlooked much of the room's fine architectural finishes.

7.3.2.3 Delivery Room (a.k.a. Abbey Room)

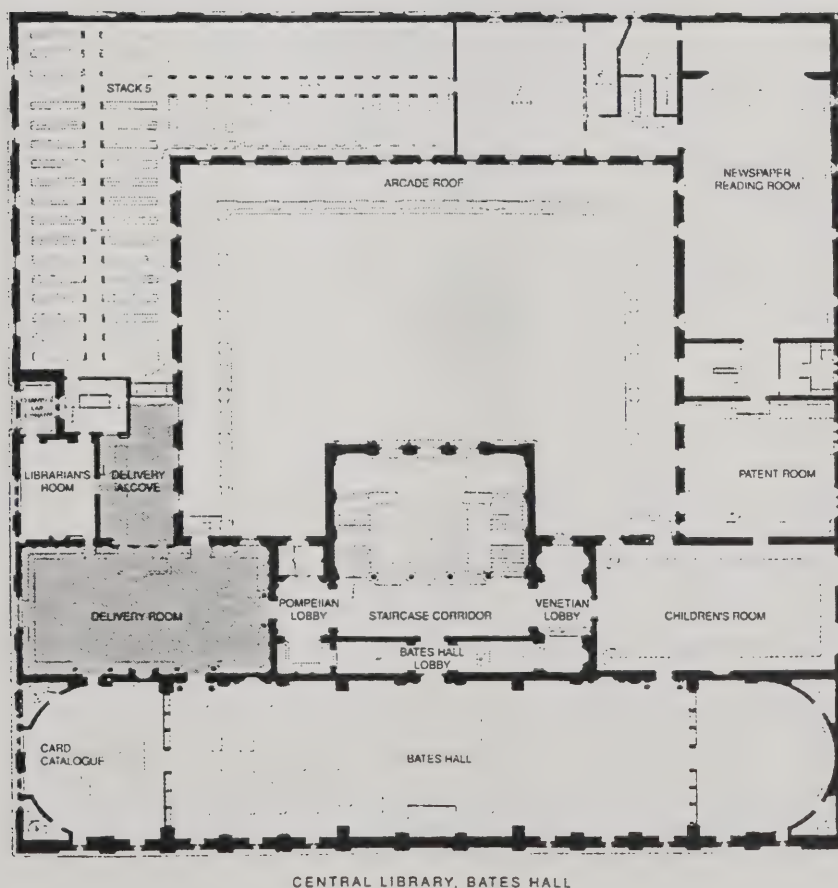
1990s Restoration Room No.
401

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Waiting Room
Monograph	Delivery Room
1895	Delivery Room
1897	Waiting Room
1898	Issue Department (called “Delivery” in Trustees Annual Report)
1902	Issue Department
1908	Issue Department
1961	Abbey Room (Public Catalogue)
1975	Abbey Room (Public Catalogue removed)

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed 1895

Purpose

The Delivery Room, located directly outside Bates Hall, was originally where books for home borrowing were requested, picked up, and returned. Books for use in Bates Hall could also be requested here; its proximity to Bates Hall made it the logical location to serve this purpose. Library users would bring their call slips to the delivery desk, behind which was a distributing room. The distributing room, or “Tube Room,” contained pneumatic tubes into which the request slip would be placed for transport to the stack containing the requested book. Attendants in the stacks would receive the slip, locate the book, and send it back to the Delivery Room in baskets on an electrically powered Book Railway System. This system, borrowed from similar systems used in department stores as an overhead package and change conveyor, was a library innovation (figs. I-46, I-50).³⁰³

Physical Description

On October 31, 1893, the Trustees approved McKim’s revised drawings for the Delivery Room at the cost of \$32,000.³⁰⁴ In 1895 Herbert Small described the Delivery Room as the “most sumptuous room in the Library,”³⁰⁵ although it was not yet fully completed. He described a heavily raftered ceiling painted in deep blues and purples, “heavy and elaborate” richly colored marble doorways and mantle, and a wainscot of light colored oak. These architectural details were further supplemented by Edwin Abbey’s paintings of the “Quest of the Holy Grail,” which ultimately covered the walls from the top of the wainscot to the ceiling. Jordy suggested that the feeling of the room is “suggestive of late medieval or early Renaissance halls of the English manor, which McKim, Mead & White had vernacularly adapted as the core of the freely disposed, informal planning of their early shingle houses.”³⁰⁶

Architectural Details and Finishes

McKim’s use of four different types of marble in this 64-foot by 33-foot room contributed greatly to its image of sumptuousness (fig. I-44). Its floor was tiled with white Istrian and red Verona marbles. A low platform, which ran around the perimeter of the room and under the delivery desk, was also of marble. Correspondence between Wolters and McKim indicates that the platform may have been Numidian, red Verona, or Echaillon marble, but no definite evidence has been found as to what was finally decided.³⁰⁷ The three doorways on the east and north walls had Corinthian columns of variegated red and green Levanto marble, bases and capitals of deep red rouge antique marble, and entablatures of both types of marble. The entablatures of the doors were similar to those in Bates Hall but less elaborate. The 11-foot high mantel in the middle of the east wall

was of highly polished rouge antique marble, heavily carved with Renaissance ornament (fig. I-48).³⁰⁸

The doors housed in the elaborate marble door surrounds were of wood and pigskin. The entrance from the staircase corridor was oak double doors. The doors leading to Bates Hall were covered with pigskin, and had oval windows cut into them.

In 1895, the oak wainscot was described as light and somewhat incongruous with the richer tones of the rest of the materials. Small claimed, however, that it would be darkened and decorated with gilding to match the gilt moldings and pilasters in which Abbey's paintings were framed.³⁰⁹ Fluted pilasters with Corinthian capitals divided the panels of the wainscot and support a heavily modeled oak cornice.³¹⁰ Low wooden benches were mounted on the platform that ran around the perimeter of the room. The ceiling, which was constructed of four large wooden crossbeams intersected by 57 smaller beams running north-south, was also unfinished in 1895. As of then, the background was painted a deep purple and the beams were blue with red accents. Like the wainscot, the ceiling decoration was to be enriched with gilding.³¹¹ An undated drawing presumed to be a design drawing illustrates the ceiling decoration and gives instructions for its treatment (fig. D-19). At the bottom of the drawing, it says:

All painted ornaments in three and four colors to each figure and a final glaze over each.

Relief ornaments to be gilded and glazed in colors.

All plain work of ceiling and beams to receive four coats of oil paint in various colors.³¹²

In fact, the ceiling was adorned with low relief, gilded ornamentation, but the wainscot, although darkened with stain, was never gilded.

Fixtures and Furnishings

The first account of the Delivery Room mentions several notable pieces of furniture. Across from the mantel, there was a long oak delivery desk flanked by two iron electric light standards supported upon the backs of two large white marble tortoises.³¹³ These light standards sat on their own square platforms of marble (fig. I-45). Directly in front of the fireplace was a row of slatbacked wooden chairs that Jordy describes as "Windsor-like."³¹⁴ Other early photographs show several tables with more of these chairs around them (fig. I-47).³¹⁵ Wrought bronze torchieres were mounted one on either side of the mantel, the door in the north wall, and the window in the south wall. These decorative fixtures, which are still hung in the room, have a large globe surrounded by six smaller bulbs. In addition, in 1895 there was a bulletin board on which titles of new publications

were posted, an oak case where the popular new books were displayed, and two cabinets holding a card catalog of fiction, popular history, and biography.³¹⁶

On May 14, 1895, the Trustees approved that venetian blinds should be ordered for the Delivery Room windows, but existing photographs do not show any of the windows, so it is not certain that this was done.³¹⁷

In April 1895, Bowker Torrey & Co. was commissioned to create a marble table in place of the wooden one in the room.³¹⁸ Only two weeks after the contract for \$1,996 was awarded, the Trustees wanted out of the contract.³¹⁹ After negotiations, Bowker Torrey finally accepted a fee of \$200 for the release of the contract, and the marble table was never done.^{320 & 321}

Artwork: Abbey Murals

Edwin Austin Abbey, although an established and respected book and magazine illustrator, was at first glance an unlikely candidate to be chosen to do mural paintings for the Library. Originally from Philadelphia, Abbey resided in England where he became close friends with John Singer Sargent. The story of Abbey's selection, as related by Walter Muir Whitehill, was that on a visit to New York in 1890, Abbey happened to dine with John Singer Sargent, McKim, White and Augustus St. Gaudens. During the dinner, McKim became convinced that Abbey should "try his hand for the first time at mural painting."³²² In May of that year, McKim brought Abbey to Boston to see the building and meet with the Trustees. Abbey, so impressed with what he had seen in Boston, agreed to do the mural paintings while at the same time, McKim convinced Samuel Abbott and the Trustees to commission him to decorate the Delivery Room.³²³ On February 17, 1893, Abbey signed a contract to provide murals for the walls in the Delivery Room for \$15,000.³²⁴

As to the subject of the paintings, Abbey explained his choice of the "Quest of the Holy Grail" in an "Argument of Decoration" submitted to the Library:

As the decorations with which I have been entrusted are for the Delivery Room of a Public Library, it has seemed to me appropriate to seek my subject in legendary romance, the fountainhead from which many branches of literature have sprung, and after much study and research among its various cycles, I have chosen the 'Quest of the Holy Grail' as a suitable theme. This legend is a source of romance common to all the peoples from whom modern literature has been derived, poets and thinkers alike, from mediæval times to our own day, having used it as a type of the loftiest goal of man's effort. The reason for this is that the elaboration of the Grail legend represents the first effort of the early singers of song and tellers of tales, forerunners of the poets and novelists of later times, to divert the attention of their rude audience from deeds of violence and brutality by holding up for their admiration the life of the 'Blameless Knight' and to impress upon them that the higher

qualities of Mercy, Gentleness and Virtue were not incompatible with deeds of the highest knightly valor.³²⁵

Abbey's choice of the "Quest for the Holy Grail" is considered here as an episode of the story of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Around the time of the paintings' installation, Henry James wrote a brief summary of the story. His interpretation is now distributed in the Abbey Room for observers to consult while viewing the paintings.

The Holy Grail was fabled to be the sacred vessel from which our Lord had eaten at the Last Supper, and into which (having purchased it from Pontius Pilate), Joseph of Arimathea had gathered the divine blood of His wounds. Its existence, its preservation, its miraculous virtues and properties were a cherished popular belief in the early ages of European Christianity; and in the folk-lore from which the twelfth-century narrators, Walter Mapes in England, Chretien de Troyes in France, and Wolfram von Eschenbach in Germany, drew their material, it was represented as guarded for ages in the Castle of the Grail by the descendants of the "rich man," to whom the body of Jesus had been surrendered, where it awaited the coming of the perfect knight, who alone should be worthy to have knowledge of it. This perfect knight is introduced to us in the romances of the Arthurian cycle, so largely devoted to the adventures of the various candidates for this most exalted of rewards. Incomparable were the properties of the Grail, the enjoyment of a revelation of which conveyed, among many privileges, the ability to live, and to cause others to live, indefinitely without food, as well as the achievement of universal knowledge, and of invulnerability in battle.

This revelation was the proof and recompense of the highest knightly purity, the perfection constituting its possessor the type of the knightly character; so that the highest conceivable emprise for the Companions of the Round Table was to attain to such a consecration—to cause the transcendent vessel to be made manifest to them. The incarnation of the ideal knighthood in the group here exhibited is that stainless Sir Galahad, with whom—on different lines—Tennyson has touched the imagination of all readers.³²⁶

Small suggested that Abbey picked and chose from the various interpretations of the legend that James mentioned above. Abbey concentrated mainly on the French and German sources of the twelfth and thirteenth century. Small wrote, "The legend is variously told in these earlier romances, and Mr. Abbey has chosen and rejected in order to produce a more orderly and effective story, but he has preserved throughout the main thread of the theme."³²⁷

Five of the eight-foot high paintings were installed in April 1895, covering half of the empty wall space in the room. Although the Library murals were Abbey's first mural commission, they received high praise both for artistic merit and choice of subject matter. In the *New England Magazine*, Herbert Walker said of the murals, "... the delicacy of drawing and deliberate distrust of sensational technique ... mark it as a very unusual and excellent example of mural decoration."³²⁸ Of the subject matter, T. R. Sullivan wrote, "The subject was singularly well selected for its place and purpose.... A more suggestive and inspiring theme than this for such a waiting-room could scarcely be conceived."³²⁹

A brief description of the panels follows:

The first panel depicts Galahad as an infant held up by one of the nuns who raised him. He is visited by an angel carrying the Grail covered by a cloth and a flock of doves fly around, one of which carries a golden censer.

In the second panel, an older Galahad dressed in a red robe, kneels before a shrine in an accurately depicted ancient Celtic chapel. Sir Lancelot and Sir Bors, both dressed in twelfth century chain armor, confer on him the order of knighthood by fastening the spurs upon his feet. Nuns stand behind Bors and Lancelot, and angels and saints are also present.

The third panel depicts Galahad being led to the Round Table of King Arthur by the white robed and hooded, Joseph of Arimathea. King Arthur rises from his throne under a baldachin decorated with carved Celtic dragons and supported by decoratively ornamented marble pillars, to greet them. A ring of angels hovers over the table around the circular hall. One angel lifts the cloth which was covering the Siege Perilous and reveals the words “This is the seat of Galahad” which float before the Siege. All the knights including Lancelot and Bors hold up the crosses of their swords in awe.

In the fourth panel, the knights are bidding farewell on their Quest. Dressed in armor, holding their spears, they kneel in front of the archbishop who lifts up his hands in blessing. Priests kneel on either side of the altar, while King Arthur kneels on the steps. In the background, behind the grille are Queen Guinevere and the ladies of the court.

The fifth picture, which encompasses the entire width of the north wall, depicts Galahad’s first adventure. It takes place in the Castle of the Grail in the hall of Amfortas where Amfortas, covered with a bearskin, lies suffering upon a Celtic coffin. The procession of the Grail—the angel holding the grail, two soldiers carrying seven-branched candlesticks, Herodias carrying the head of John the Baptist, and Longius, leaning against his spear—is at the right of the panel. The Grail shines brightly, tempting Galahad, but he does not ask the question required to free Amfortas from his lifeless state.

The sixth panel, a small dark scene, is Galahad meeting the “Loathly Damsel” upon leaving the castle. He kneels in the lower left corner while she stands at the right.

Galahad fights the seven deadly sins, personified by seven knights, in the seventh panel. Suited in armor over his red robe, he fends off the seven knights with his sword and shield.

In the eighth panel, above the door, Galahad is presented the key to the castle of virtues by an aged monk.

The ninth and largest of the panels directly above the mantel shows Galahad’s entrance into the castle. He is welcomed by a group of over 20 imprisoned maidens who outstretch their hands for him to kiss. The maidens are depicted in draped gowns and jewels characteristic of Abbey’s attention to historic detail.

In the tenth panel, above the southern door, Galahad parts from Blanchefleur, his new bride, to continue his Quest. Blanchefleur, dressed in bridal attire still clenches her bouquet in her lap while Galahad looks toward the servant holding his sword and shield.

Galahad returns to the Castle of the Grail in the eleventh panel, to release Amfortas from his “earthly bonds.” The angel with the Grail accompanies him.

The twelfth panel shows Galahad atop a white charger carrying a banner and followed by the people.

In the thirteenth panel, Sir Galahad is aboard Solomon’s Ship. The angel with the Grail is seated in the bow of the ship, and three spindles made from the “Tree of Life” rest upon a pillow in the stern.

The fourteenth panel is a distant view of the City of Sarras to which Galahad has come.

The final panel shows Galahad casting off the crown and sword as he is finally granted a viewing of the Grail held up by Joseph of Arimathea. A group of angels surrounds Joseph and Galahad. The branches of the Golden Tree are in the foreground. The Grail, crown, and angels’ halos are golden and in low relief in this culminating panel.

Library Alterations to 1909

Purpose

The pneumatic tube system was improved in 1898 to make it more efficient in terms of space and to speed up the issuing of books. Originally, the 28 pneumatic tubes stretched out in a line, but in 1898 they were grouped in a circle “for more convenient operation.”³³⁰ The original design was criticized in the 1914–15 Annual Report as “inadequate.” It stated that “the tubes were in a long straight row, so that a person had to walk back and forth to serve them (fig I-46).”³³¹ This change is illustrated in the building plans contained in the 1898 Trustees Annual Report and in a photograph (fig. I-51).³³² From the delivery desk, the books still had to be hand-delivered to other locations in the Library.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

In 1901 the unfinished ceiling was “treated with ornaments in lead, in low relief, having been applied to the beams and painted with a slight use of gold.” Mr. H. M. Lawrence of the Lewis F. Perry & Whitney Company of Boston carried out this decorative work.³³³ In his 1908 edition of the handbook, Small describes the finished ceiling ornament that remains today. The large beams are decorated with raised lead ornaments that are nailed to the beam and heavily gilded. These ornaments—scrolls, rosettes, and cupids—have a Renaissance character and were reportedly intended to resemble the Venetian ornament in the Library of the Doge’s palace in Venice, Italy. The ground of the large beams is tinted with greens, browns, blues, and yellows. The smaller beams are treated in a similar fashion, but with smaller scale ornament. The deepest spaces on the ceiling are tinted a

dull blue.³³⁴ A frieze running around the top of the walls is similarly decorated, and a small gilded molding connects it with the ceiling. This molding also runs along the tops of the large cross beams.

Fixtures and Furnishings

In 1897, two chandeliers were added (fig. I-47), and in 1898, the registration desk was moved from the Children's Room to the Delivery Room.

Artwork: Abbey Murals

The installation of all 15 panels of "Quest of the Holy Grail" was completed in January 1902, at which point Abbey was paid the balance of his commission.³³⁵ In addition to the Lewis F. Perry & Whitney Company, which prepared the walls and gilded the frames for the Abbey paintings, F. L. Whitcomb and Charles Emmel were reported to have done staging and modeling associated with the installation of the paintings.³³⁶

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

The alterations occurring after 1909 were mainly use changes, furniture additions and removals related to these use changes, and upgrading of mechanical systems for both practical and aesthetic reasons.

A distressing entry in the Report of the Director in the Trustees' Annual Report for the year ending January 31, 1925, related the following:

After thirty years of use most of the mechanical equipment of the Central Library has now broken down. The book carrier system has been out of commission for several months, necessitating the carrying of all books by messenger, with a consequent delay in service. The frequent breakdown of the pneumatic tube system which carries the call-slips for books from the issue room to the various floors of the library stacks, has resulted in serious delays, confusion, and on the part of the users of the Library many complaints.³³⁷

The 1924–25 Trustees Annual Report noted that increased appropriations had allowed for many needed repairs including repairing and rebuilding the book railway system. However, no mention was made of the pneumatic tubing. The 1926 Annual Report then says the Book Railway system was "completely over-hauled." In 1928, new marble blocks were also laid in some sections of the floor.³³⁸

The lighting of the Delivery Room seems to have been a problem throughout its history. In 1923, after her husband's death, Mrs. Abbey objected to the lighting in the room. Accordingly, the Trustees ordered that all lights over the paintings be removed and that

the curtains be replaced with others that would control the lighting of the room.³³⁹ In 1928, new lighting fixtures were installed in the Delivery Room,³⁴⁰ yet in 1932 and 1933, the Examining Committee ordered that the lighting needed improvement. In 1933 they suggested consulting with a lighting engineer to improve the situation.³⁴¹ Whitehill makes an interesting point in his most recent article, stating that the Abbey murals were created to be seen in the low light levels provided by McKim in the first incarnation of the room. Sensibilities to light levels may have changed by the 1920s and 30s prompting the desire for more light in the room. However, in these higher light levels, the murals take on a totally different character than Abbey intended.³⁴²

Drawings, from 1932 to 1934, produced by Fox & Gale Architects, indicate major changes to the room, including the addition of desk lights and table lights. A set of drawings from 1932–33 indicate that built-in oak bookcases and a counter were installed above the existing benches in the northeast corner of the room. The perimeter step was removed in front of the cases. In addition, there are new tables and desks with lights and benches in the center of the room.³⁴³ There is no photographic documentation or physical evidence in the room to confirm that these changes actually occurred.

The 1934 Fox & Gale drawings, however, show changes that are substantiated by physical evidence in the room.³⁴⁴ These drawings detailed the installation of an oak railing running from the east to west directly underneath the large rafter at the south end of the room. This railing, made of turned oak balusters, acted as a low partition that sectioned off the southern end of the room. There were two openings in the railing for passage from one side to the other. In addition, these drawings called for the removal of the portion of the platform step that ran directly in front of the south window. Although no photographs have been found of the room with the railing, there is a strip of replacement floor tile set into the original tile at the exact location of the railing in the drawings. It is logical to assume that the railing in the drawings or something like it was installed here, and upon its removal the existing repairs were made. No furniture is shown in the drawings, so it is unclear what purpose this railing actually served. The railing was removed during the 1961 campaign of alterations discussed below.³⁴⁵

No references to changes in the room were found again until December 1947 when a new Electric Lighting System for the Abbey Room is illustrated in a drawing from the office of Ames, Child & Graves. This drawing includes a ceiling plan, elevations of the room, and details of light fixtures.³⁴⁶ The existing central hanging light fixture was installed at this time (fig. CI-21). Called a “Mural Light,” this fixture is a rectangular wooden box with lights mounted within it. The lights are arranged in such a way that they are hidden by the wooden box and angled to light the Abbey murals. The metal “shields” still remaining on the torchieres were also put in at this time. The 1947 Ames, Child & Graves drawings were also the first to note the recessed downlights cut into the beams. It appears

that, when the holes were cut, the wood around each opening was either replaced or repainted. In the beams that run east-west, the raised ornaments of the center medallions are gone. However, the flat beams have been repainted to look like the raised ornament is still present. Presumably, the installation of the lights required the removal of this raised ornament.

A 1948 Ames, Child & Graves drawing details the addition of a bookcase under the window on the south wall. It fits precisely between the benches, and its top aligns with the marble window sill.³⁴⁷ No photographs of this installation have been found.

In April of 1953, the first drawings were made for moving the Public Catalogue into the Abbey Room from the southern apse in Bates Hall. These drawings show that some card catalogue cabinets and reference stands were already located in the center of the floor in the southern half of the room. They also show additional cases around the perimeter of the room and the “U” shaped reference desk in the center of Bates Hall.³⁴⁸

The Delivery Room was not immune to the wave of changes sweeping the Library in the 1950s and '60s. In 1961, as the 1953 Ames, Child & Graves drawing illustrated, the main card catalogue was moved from the apse of Bates Hall into the Delivery Room. A few years earlier, the Library had moved popular books for home borrowing to new open stacks on the ground floor, making the books readily accessible to the users, but leaving the Delivery Room with no apparent function.³⁴⁹ By 1962, a new conveyor belt extended the old system into Bates Hall through a “Subveyor” that carried the books there in an elevator from Entresol A.³⁵⁰ Any function the Delivery Room originally served was then either on the ground floor or in Bates Hall.

There are no photographs of the room at this time, but a description in Jordy’s book gives an impression of what it was like. He said that the installation of the card catalogue in the Delivery Room was a grave mistake, stating that the room “... all but lost its visual quality,” once the file cases filled the space.³⁵¹ He also lamented the fact that users would be deprived of the grand architectural experience McKim had created with his monumental staircase hall, since they could do all home borrowing without ever leaving the ground floor of the Library.³⁵² This was precisely the intention of the prevailing Library administration’s “modernization” scheme that was heavily based on moving most of the public spaces to the ground floor level for the convenience of its users.

The installation of the card catalogue in the Abbey Room required other changes in the room as well. The platform step and benches around the perimeter of the room were removed to make space for the card cases against the walls. A new terrazzo floor was installed in the location where the benches had been inset. In addition, new return moldings had to be created for the bases of the pilasters that were previously concealed by

the benches. The sconces, now located underneath the original torchieres, were installed at this point, and are illustrated in the Ames, Child & Graves drawings of 1961.³⁵³ New ductwork in the delivery alcove and librarian's rooms west of the Abbey Room necessitated cutting openings in the wainscot of the west wall and the installation of grilles to cover the vent openings. Also on the west wall, the window openings that led to the delivery alcove were opened up all the way to the floor, and the counter was removed from them. In addition, in 1963 the doors leading to the Pompeian Lobby and to Bates Hall were changed from wood and leather to "herculite."³⁵⁴

The catalogue remained in the Delivery Room until the summer of 1975 when it was moved into the Elliott Room and the Children's Room (406). The Delivery Room continued to be the delivery point for books from the research library stacks.³⁵⁵ The plan at this time was to restore the room by cleaning and polishing the marble floor and refinishing the woodwork in the room.

Artwork: Abbey Murals

The Trustees' Annual Report, dated January 31, 1925, warned that, "The mural decorations demand immediate attention, in order to prevent serious deterioration." This determination may have been prompted by a letter from Arthur Fairbanks, the Director of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. A reference to the letter in the Trustees minutes of January 9, 1925, only notes that it concerned cleaning of the Abbey paintings.³⁵⁶ The letter has not been found in this research effort, and no other record of cleaning these paintings was found.

As of the writing of this Historic Structure Report, the Delivery Room is somewhat restored to its original appearance. The card catalogue was removed and the benches replaced around the perimeter of the room. The date of the replacement of the benches is uncertain, but they are not shown in a 1977 photo.³⁵⁷ Even now the benches are not installed as they were originally, attached to the wainscot and a low platform step. They are freestanding at the level of the floor. The platform step has never been replaced. Again, as in McKim's day, the bottoms of the openings behind the delivery desk have been closed in. The upper half of the openings are no longer in use, and, therefore, often blocked with wood panels as well.

The desk across from the mantel is not the original long oak delivery desk. It is detailed in the 1961 drawings, along with one reference stand that survives in the room today.³⁵⁸ Contemporary tables and chairs were moved in and out of the room, and no permanent furniture seems to be allocated at this point.

The “Mural Light” fixture installed in 1947 remains in place today, with additional lights clipped onto a frame extending from its top. Of the four sconces mounted below the torchieres, two are missing. Several other ceiling spotlights have been installed to light the murals. The large window in the south wall has venetian blinds.

7.3.2.4

Librarian's Room

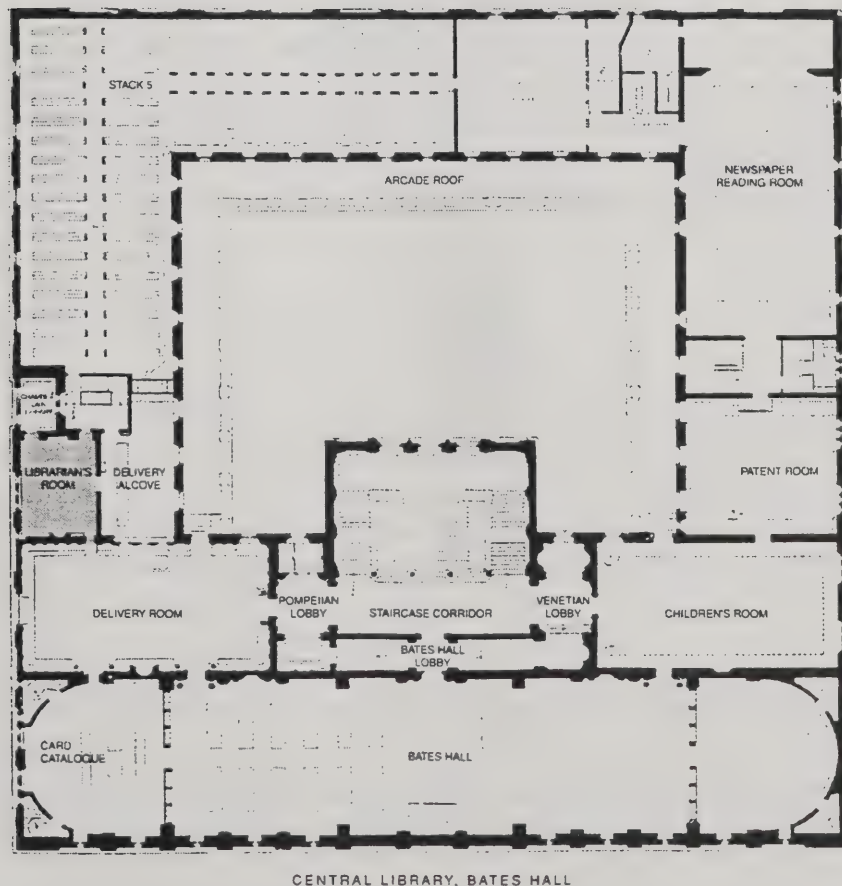
1990s Restoration Room No.
422

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Delivery
Monograph	Not labeled
1895	Librarian's Room
1897	Librarian
1898	Registration Department (part of Issue Department)
1902	Registration Department (part of Issue Department)
1908	Registration Department (part of Issue Department)
1916	Registration Department (part of Issue Department)
1964	Director's Office & Officer in Charge of Public Services

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed in 1895

In the Delivery Room, to the left of the door to the Delivery Alcove, there was a door that led to the Librarian's office. This office had a terrazzo floor; American Oak doors, wainscot, and cornice; white marble mantel, jambs, and thresholds; plaster walls and ceiling, and; a brick hearth. Natural light came from four windows on Blagden Street.³⁵⁹ There were doors leading from this room to the Delivery alcove, to a small room housing the Chamberlain Autograph Collection, and to the service staircase. A mantel was located on the east wall, and opposite it on the west wall there was a recess (fig. D-22).

Library Alterations to 1909

In 1898, the delivery alcove and librarian's quarters were reconfigured into one space. The librarian's office was moved to a new administrative suite in the stacks up a small flight of steps from the Autograph Room. The space formerly used as the Librarian's Room was converted into the Registration Department (fig. I-52). It was entered through a wide new door at the end of the west wall of the Delivery Room. The registration desk had been moved to the Delivery Room in 1897, but apparently by the year 1908 the increased number of registrants necessitated a space solely dedicated to registration. The Registration Department had a built-in counter running the length of the room. There was a long cabinet, approximately 5-feet high, behind the desk, for registration card storage. The wall formerly separating the Librarian's Room from the delivery alcove was removed, so the cabinet served as a partition between this department and the alcove. Light was now obtained from both the Blagden Street windows and the courtyard windows.

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

A set of 1961 Ames & Graves drawings illustrates the installation of a drop ceiling of acoustical tile with air ducting hung above it.³⁶⁰ This installation drastically changed the appearance of the room concealing the high plaster ceiling and simple cornice designed by McKim. At this time, the Public Catalog was put into the Delivery Room and into the alcove as well. The Registration Department was no longer in the southern half of the room. Instead, this area was split into two rooms, one for the Director of Research and one for the "Officer in Charge."

There was a plaster partition between the two rooms, and in addition to the new furred acoustic ceiling, some finishes and details were changed. The terrazzo tile in both rooms was covered with rubber tile. In the Director's office, a wooden chair rail and marble base molding were installed. Some paneling was removed, and new cabinets were installed in the west wall niche. In the office of the Officer in Charge, the base molding was of rubber

tile, no chairrail was installed, and cabinets were changed. In addition, the large doorway used for the Registration Department was closed, and the original door was reopened.

A 1972 account of the room states that the Director and Division of Reference and Research Services was no longer in the old Librarian's space, but had been moved to Bates Hall. The card catalog was still in the Delivery Room, but uses of many rooms were changed temporarily due to the opening of the Johnson Building.³⁶¹

Currently the two small rooms, originally the Librarian's Room, house the Research Library Offices of the Head Research Librarian and her assistants. Most of the 1961 details and finishes still remain. The walls are painted white. The acoustic ceiling, linoleum tile floors, wood chairrails and marble base molding in the old Director's Office, as well as all the cabinets and paneling in both offices are still in place.

7.3.2.5

Trustees' Room
Trustees' Waiting Room
Trustees' Ante Room

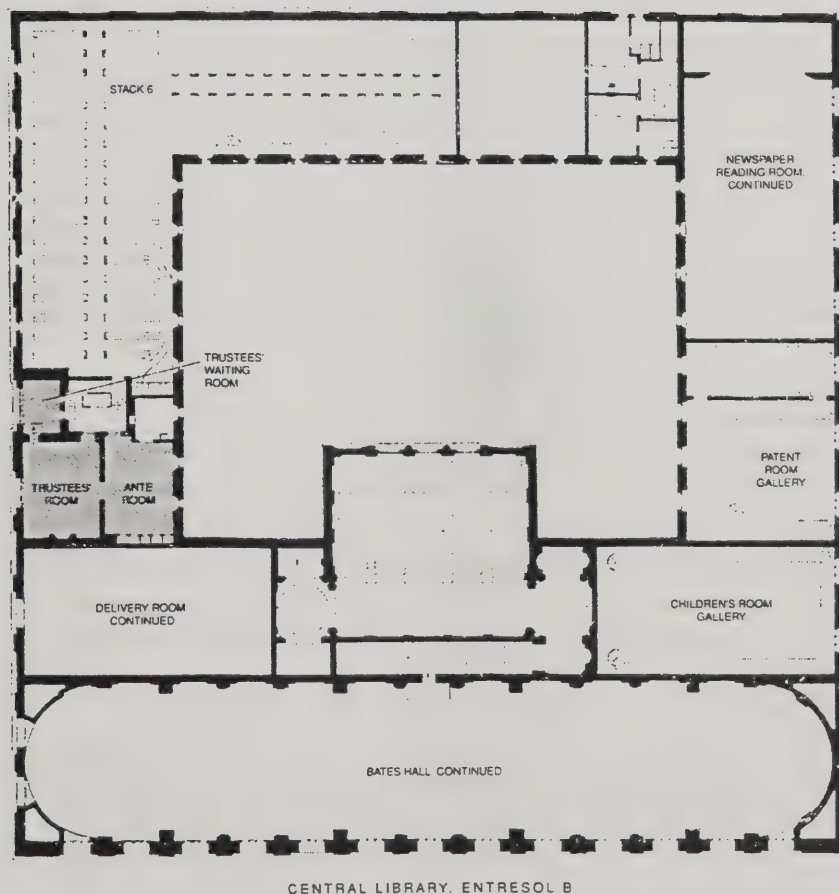
1990s Restoration Room Nos.
610, 611

Use/Name Changes of Room

1895 to present Trustees' Room, Waiting Room, Ante Room

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed 1895

Trustees' Room

Purpose

The Trustees' Room, as its name suggests, was the location of Trustees' meetings. The central role of the Trustees in the functioning of the Boston Public Library has already been addressed in this report in Section 4.0. The Trustees' Room was a dignified conference area for the purpose of important decision making on the part of the Library. The function of this room is still the same today.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

The Trustees' Room was originally visualized by McKim to be on the Bates Hall Floor behind the Delivery Room, in the location of the delivery alcove. In the heliotype plans, the room was shown in plan as an oval shaped space surrounded by services for the Trustees, such as a cloak closet and lavatory (fig. H-8). A perspective view of the oval room, showed paneled walls with a decoratively molded frieze and cornice supported by fluted Doric pilasters (fig. H-15). A decorative mantelpiece adorned the wall as well, and the ceiling appeared to be domed. By the Library opening in 1895, the room's location had moved to Entresol B, the mezzanine level between the second and third floors, where it is still located today along with the Waiting Room and Ante Room.

On July 18, 1893, McKim submitted plans for the completion of the Trustees' Room at a cost of \$3690.³⁶² As built, the Trustees' Room was actually a rectangular room, but just as elaborately finished as the visionary drawing of a round room in the 1889 heliotypes (fig. D-21). It was lavishly finished in the finest materials and included antiques McKim had found in his travels abroad. Much of the woodwork, including the wainscot, doors and ceiling, came from a Parisian hotel of the First Empire.³⁶³ The floor was American oak parquet tile in a herringbone pattern. The wood wainscot and doors were constructed of cream and gold painted square panels, each ornamented in the center with a carved head or figure. The cornice and ceiling were treated similarly in cream paint with gold details. They also contained decorative painting in the center of the panels. Red, green, and blue painted faces adorned the centers of the ceiling panels.

An early photograph shows moldings that one would expect to be exposed on the plaster walls between the wainscot and the ceiling (fig. I-54). The same photo shows a portion of velour hanging on one wall and it appears that several different paint colors were being

tested on the walls as well. Room descriptions and other evidence indicate that the moldings were eventually removed from the walls, and green velour material was installed (fig. I-55). According to the Trustees' Minutes, after McKim was authorized to decorate the walls with "stuff of such fabric and color as he shall think best" in 1894 Elmer Garnsey was contracted to furnish and install the wall covering and window drapery for the room for the sum of \$500.³⁶⁴ There is one large arched window in the south wall of the room.

On the east wall, there is a gray limestone, French Renaissance mantle purchased by McKim in London from I. I. Duveen Importer of Antique and Decorative Furniture for \$650 (fig. I-53).³⁶⁵

Fixtures and Furnishings

At the opening of the Library, there was a gilt chandelier hanging from the center of the ceiling. It had six frosted glass globes similar to those of the four wall sconces mounted on the east and west walls. Two fabric-shaded lamps are shown on an undated photo of the room. They have electrical cords connecting them to the chandelier in the ceiling (fig. I-56).

On January 8, 1895 a committee was formed to choose the furniture for the Trustees' Room, and in April they were granted permission to hire an "expert decorator" for furnishing the room.³⁶⁶ Whitehill reports that the furnishings were from a Pavilion at Haarlem that had been Louis Bonaparte's palace during his tenure as King of Holland.³⁶⁷

There was a long rectangular wooden table with decorative lion's paw legs. Around the table there were six upholstered chairs with winged griffins on the arms. Many of the photos show a bird cage-like clock on the mantelpiece that still remains today.

Trustees' Waiting Room

Purpose

The Waiting Room of the Trustees' Room appears to have been simply a reception area for the main Trustees' Room.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

A small room to the west of the Trustees' Room was designated as the Trustees' Waiting Room. No descriptions of this private space were published, but according to the present

state of the room, it appears that the specifications on McKim's original drawings were followed (fig. D-20). The floor was of wood planks. On the south wall there was a built-in bench under the window flanked by two glass enclosed Italian walnut bookcases. Matching bookcases covered the entire north wall, as well. Above the bookcases on the north wall, there was a round window looking into the hallway. The ceiling was cross-vaulted and painted. A molded frieze ran around the room under the lunettes. Today, the lunettes have a tan ground with a trim of molded leaves in red, olive and gold. The frieze is also painted in red, olive and gold. The wall beneath the frieze is painted mauve. The present colors on the walls and other decoration do not appear to be the original colors.

Fixtures and Furnishings

Today, there is a modern fixture hanging from the center of the cross-vaulted ceiling. No evidence of the original fixture has been found. Inside the room today, there are two unmatched upholstered chairs on the west wall.

Trustees' Ante Room

Purpose

The Trustees' Ante Room, located to the north of the Trustees Room, may have also been used as a larger waiting room or possibly a preparation room for those presenting proposals to the Board.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

Like the Trustees' Room proper, the Ante Room as seen today, is very similar to McKim's original drawing. Other than this drawing, there is no other documentation for the room as built. The drawing details a terrazzo floor with a marble base. All sills were marble. The walls were of plaster, and the door and window trim was of English Oak. This drawing also included the stairs outside the Ante Room, which had Hickory treads and a leather rail.³⁶⁸

The Ante Room had a flat plaster ceiling with a simple crown molding. In the north wall there were two small windows looking into the court. On the south wall was a door leading into the Trustees' Room, and on the west wall was a door leading to the hallway and stairs.

Existing today, and likely to have been there originally, are built-in recessed wooden bookshelves around the east end of the room.

Fixtures and Furnishings

No details of original fixtures were found.

A long oak table and surrounding Windsor chairs, present in the room today, are likely to be the original, or similar to the original, furnishings that were in the room.

Library Alterations to 1909

Trustees' Room

No significant changes were made.

A photo shows a different, simpler chandelier than the original one, which is present in the room today (fig. I-58).

Trustees' Waiting Room

No evidence of changes was found.

Trustees' Ante Room

No evidence of changes was found.

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

Trustees' Room

Although finishes and details are significantly worn, the Trustees' Room today looks remarkably the same as it did at the opening of the Library in 1895. Pieces of the paneling on the walls are missing; the ceiling paint appears darkened or damaged in places; the velours on the wall are now darkened to brown; and the upholstery on the chairs is faded and worn sometimes to the stuffing.

A report done in 1986 by the Center for Conservation & Technical Studies and Harvard University Art Museums indicated that there was some cracking and splitting in all 20 panels because of their firm attachment to the structure above. Dark overpainting was evident in the light colored backgrounds of all panels as well.³⁶⁹

Trustees' Waiting Room

No evidence of changes was found.

Trustees' Ante Room

Although no documentation has been found for the changes, a few were made during this time period. A linoleum tile floor now obscures the original terrazzo floor except in the area where there is a mosaic of the seal of the City of Boston. It is assumed that this seal was existing when the room was first built. There are curtain rods hanging over the windows on the north wall. There are also three later fixtures hanging from the ceiling.

The walls and bookcases are currently painted mint green.

7.3.2.6 1898 Librarian's Room & Offices (level of stack 5)

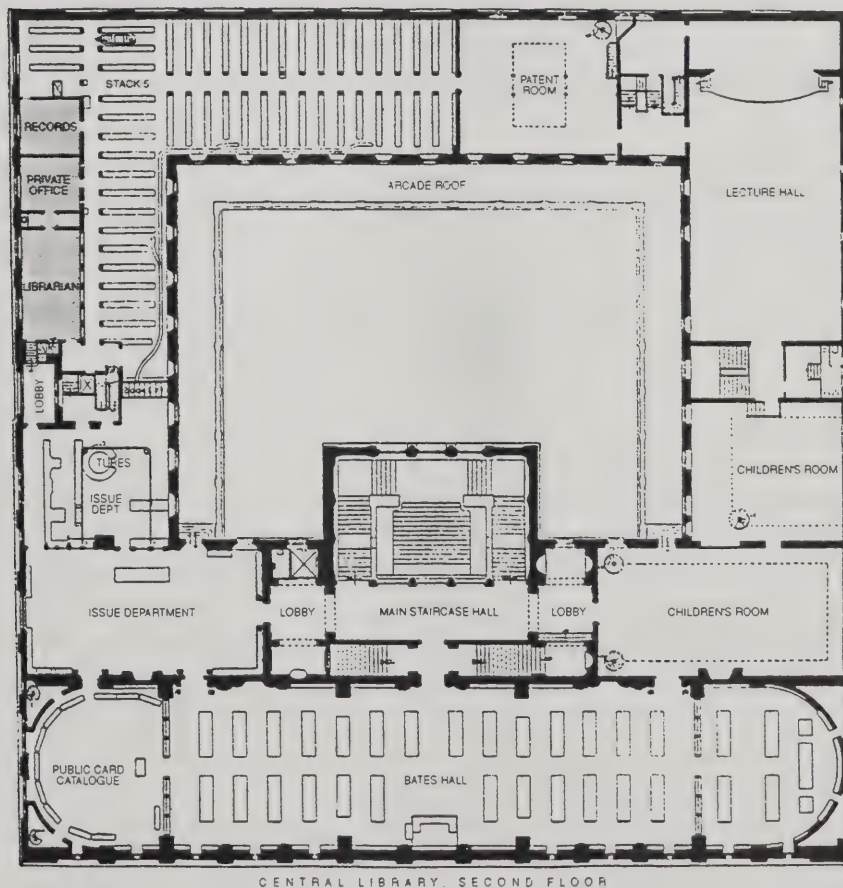
1990s Restoration Room No.
417

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Stack
Monograph	Stack
1895	Stack
1898	Librarian, Private Office, Records
1908	Librarian, Private Office, Records
1916	Librarian, Private Office, Records
1959	Executive Offices, Private Office, Records/Files/Statistics
1972	Librarian, Private Offices

Plan as of 1898

N→



Library Alterations to 1909

In the 1898 campaign of alterations, the Registration Department was put into the space of the Librarian's Room, and a new suite of rooms for the Librarian and Executive offices was built in Stack 5. The Librarian's office was the first office of the group, reached by passing through the Registration Department corridor on Blagden Street. The rooms behind the Librarian's Office included a private office and a room for records and files.³⁷⁰

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

More elaborately finished than the original Librarian's Room, the only early evidence of this room is a black and white photo dated 1909 (fig. I-60). It appears that the room has most of its original finishes today. In the photo, it appears that the floor was of the standard terrazzo found in many other rooms of the building. The new space had a wainscot of wood paneling that rose to a small dentilled cornice under the top windows. Several bookcases were inset into the paneling on the north wall. Above the wainscot, the plaster walls had a wide painted decorative border, and a molded cornice. The ceiling was deeply coffered. In the center coffer of the ceiling, the seal of Boston was painted. The original colors of the walls, paneling and ceiling have not been determined.

There are four windows on the south wall of the room (Blagden Street Side). In the early photo, the bottom ones were dressed with curtains hanging from a brass rod. The top windows appeared to have indoor shutters.

On the east wall, a door opening to a spiral stairway rises to the Trustees' Waiting Room. Another door on this wall leads to a back hall and stacks.

Fixtures and Furnishings

Four hanging fixtures are shown in the early photograph. They are simple globes with metal armature hanging from the ceiling by heavy chains. Shaded desk lamps were located on two wooden desks visible in the photo.

In addition to the wooden desks mentioned above, there were two leather-upholstered armchairs and at least two wooden tables in the photo. Windsor type chairs on wheels were placed behind the desks.

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

One major change in the Librarian's Room was the removal of the four hanging fixtures and their replacement with fluorescent hanging fixtures. The terrazzo floor was covered with gray and black linoleum tiles. Horizontal Venetian blinds were also installed in the windows, but the brass curtain rods were left in place.

The room today is painted in ivory, turquoise, red, and gold. The wood paneling is ivory with gold accents. The plaster wall above is turquoise with a border pattern of red and gold. The ceiling cornice and raised detail of the ceiling are tan, while the recesses of the coffer are turquoise. The color scheme is the same as the Trustees' Lobby above.³⁷¹

7.3.2.7

Children's Room

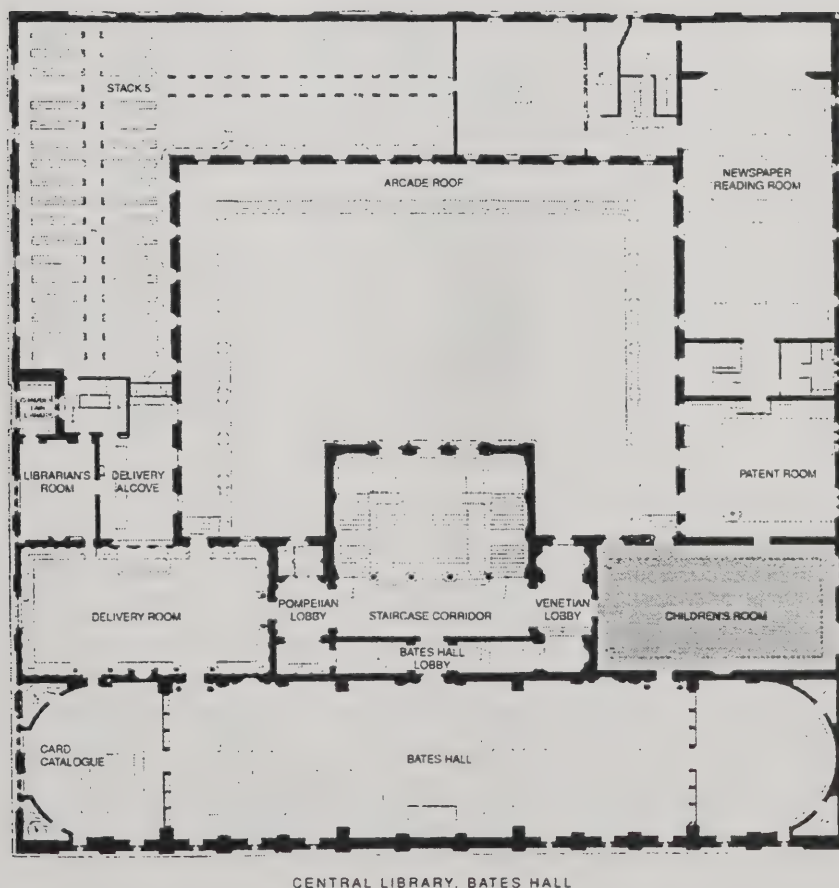
1990s Restoration Room No.
406

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Scientific Periodicals
Monograph	Patent Library #1
1895	Children's Room
1897	#10
1898	Children's Room
1902	Children's Room
1908	Children's Room
1916	Children's Room
1959	Teacher's Department
1964	Education Department
1972	Social Science Department

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed in 1895

Purpose

The Children's Room was primarily designated for “the better class of ‘juveniles’—the books—“boys’ and girls’ fiction and books of travel and adventure written for the young.”³⁷² Several written accounts indicate that at first, the room may not have been designated a Children's Room. An account written at the opening of the building in February 1895 says this room was to be used “as an overflow for the larger reading room” and a place to keep relics and articles of historical merit. No mention of children was made in this account.³⁷³ Walker's 1895 *New England Magazine* article also calls this room the “Room for Relics.”³⁷⁴ In an 1896 account, this room is labeled the “Registration Room” because the library card registration desk was located within it as well.³⁷⁵ Small's detailed account, however, seems to indicate that it was the Children's Room when the library opened in 1895.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

The Children's Room was located at the north end of the 2nd floor corridor opposite the Delivery Room. The dimensions of the room are identical to those of the Delivery Room, but there were several differences in its treatment. The Children's Room had two large windows at the gallery level of its north wall and six smaller window openings at the main level (fig. I-61). All of these are contained within the large arched windows of the Boylston Street facade. Two leather covered doors in the east wall led to Bates Hall, and one in the west wall led to the Elliott Room. The Children's Room also had a gallery that ran around the east, north, and west walls, that was accessed by spiral staircases at the southern end of the east and west sides. The spiral staircase on the east wall was later removed (between 1908 and 1929) (fig. I-62).

The Children's Room was plainly finished, unlike the lavish Delivery Room. McKim's original drawings indicate that the floors were to be marble; walls and ceiling—plastered; jambs, trims and fireplace—marble; bookcases and window trim—cherry; gallery floor—hard pine; and gallery railing and staircase—iron. Small indicates that, as built, it had a terrazzo floor, a skirting of pink Knoxville marble, and plaster walls and ceiling. The only hint of decoration was the red Verona marble mantel on the east wall that projects slightly from the wall and is topped with a simple cornice. The walls of the main floor and gallery were lined with low, built-in bookshelves that could be reached by the children without the assistance of the librarian.³⁷⁶ Framed documents, paintings, and other educational items hung above the bookshelves.

Fixtures and Furnishings

Early photographs of the Children's Room show two rows of round wooden tables that could seat about eight people. The tables appear to have been a dark color, almost black, with heavily carved doe's foot legs. The chairs were simple slatbacked chairs like those in the Delivery Room.

Library Alterations to 1909

In 1897 chandeliers were added, and in 1898 the Registration Desk was moved from the Children's Room to the Delivery Room.³⁷⁷

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

In 1911 the walls were "retinted."³⁷⁸ In 1913 tungsten filament lamps were substituted for the ordinary carbon type in the Children's Departments.³⁷⁹ A 1929 photo shows new lighting fixtures in the Children's Room (fig. I-63). The 1897 chandeliers were replaced with new hanging globe fixtures. The fixtures that were hanging under the gallery floor were removed, and lights were attached to the tops of the bookcases. This photo also shows the rubber tile flooring that was placed over the terrazzo floor in Children's Room in 1927.³⁸⁰ The east wall spiral staircase had been removed sometime between 1908 and 1929.³⁸¹

In 1924, the Examining Committee suggested that the Children's Room be moved to the location of the Catalogue and Order Departments on the ground floor and given a separate entrance on Blagden Street.³⁸² As no action had been taken by 1932, the suggestion was again made in the Examining Committee Report.

In the early 1950s, the southeast corner of the ground floor was converted into the Open Shelf Department, as the Examining Committee had urged 25 years earlier. Parts of this new department were dedicated to browsing areas for young adults and children. The new ground floor Children's area took the entire space of the original Receiving and Ordering Department, while the Catalogue Department was sectioned off to house the general Open Shelf Department, a Young Adult's Room, and offices for advisors.³⁸³ The Music Department was scheduled to move from the Special Library Floor to the location of the original Children's Room.³⁸⁴ However, according to a set of 1959 plans, this change never occurred. On these plans, the original Children's Room was labeled "Teacher's Department," presumably containing the information from the old Teacher's Reference Department formerly housed in the Elliott Room.

Repairs were called for in a set of 1964 specifications. These specifications included detailed instructions for cleaning, repair and repainting all materials.³⁸⁵

As of 1972, the old Children's Room was the home of the Social Science Department, but descriptions indicate that not many changes were made to its physical features.³⁸⁶ It was also the home of part of the card catalogue in the 1970s before the Johnson Building was erected.

7.3.2.8 Patent Room (a.k.a. Elliott Room)

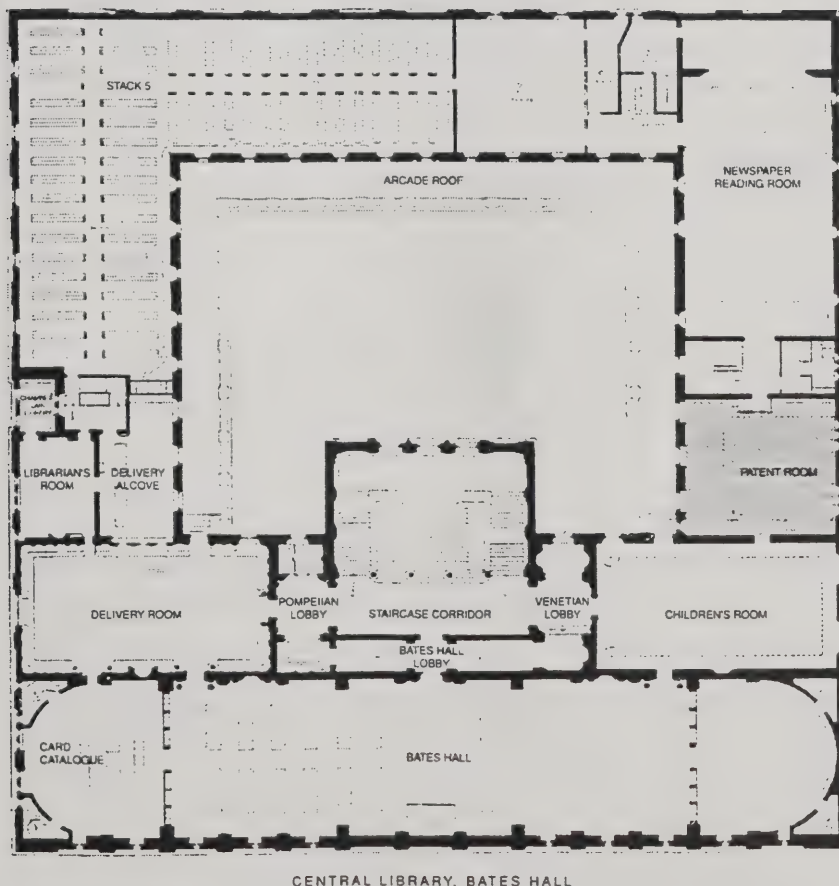
1990s Restoration Room No.
407

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Special Students Rooms (2)
Monograph	Patent Library #2
1895	Patent Room
1897	Patent Library
1898	Children's Room
1908	Children's Room
1916	Teacher's Reference
1959	Elliott Room
1964	Elliott (Judaica)
1972	Temporarily Government Documents

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed 1895

Purpose

The Patent Room is a small square room located directly to the west of the Children's Room on the same floor as Bates Hall. In McKim's schematic drawings this room is labeled "Patent Library #2" (fig. M-2). As its name suggests, the Patent Room was the repository for the Library's patent collection, touted to be the best collection in the United States outside Washington D.C.³⁸⁷ It numbered almost 5,000 volumes in 1895 and was acclaimed as having "proved already so great an aid to inventors and lawyers from Boston and other cities."³⁸⁸

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

The Patent Library originally had a gallery running around the east, south, and west walls. It extended into a space above the Boylston Street staircase that accommodated tables and shelving. It was lit by rectangular windows looking out into the courtyard and onto Boylston Street. As built, the Patent Library was finished with "severe plainness,"³⁸⁹ anticipating the installation of a ceiling painting by John Elliott. The finishes were similar to those of the Children's Room. The floor was of terrazzo, and the gallery had a granolithic floor.³⁹⁰ The walls were plaster above a skirting of pink Knoxville marble. Built-in bookcases completely covered the walls on the ground floor level.

Fixtures and Furnishings

On the main floor, there were rectangular wood tables with Windsor chairs. There was also at least one fixture hanging from the main ceiling, and smaller fixtures hanging from beneath the gallery floor.³⁹¹

Artwork: Elliott Painting

In April of 1891, the Trustees received a letter from Dr. Harold Williams offering to raise private funds to commission John Elliott to do a painting for the Library.³⁹² Parts of the letter read as follows:

In conjunction with several of my friends, I am very desirous that we may be allowed to ask Mr. John Elliott, the son in law of Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, to decorate one of the ceilings in the new Public Library Building.

Mr. Elliott has hitherto lived in Chicago where he has practiced his profession as decorator with great success and this decoration of Mrs. Porter Palmer's new house and said to be the finest things of the kind in this country...³⁹³

The Trustees and McKim approved of the choice of Elliott, and the commission was granted to him in September 1893.³⁹⁴ Elliott, a Scot who settled in Boston in 1897 when he married a Bostonian woman, then set out to Rome to carry out the painting.³⁹⁵ It was installed on the Patent Room ceiling in 1901. A description follows below.

Library Alterations to 1909

Purpose

In 1896 the Library contemplated making the Patent Room into an additional space for the Children's Room. This was actually done in 1898, and the contents of the Patent Library were moved into the space formerly used for bound newspaper files on the same floor in the west wing (see "1898 Patent Room"). The new Children's Room (also called Children's Reference Room and Teacher's Reference Room) was made into a general reference reading room with maps, photographs, and a kindergarten library for teachers in the gallery. It was finished in dark oak.³⁹⁶

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

There was some extensive remodeling in this room in late 1901 after Elliott's painting was installed. Elliott, dissatisfied that the gallery in this room obscured the view of his painting, requested to have it removed.

I avail myself of this opportunity to state that it is of the greatest importance for the decoration to be seen under the most favorable conditions from the first—i.e. with an unbroken coup d'oeil of the composition. The existing balconies render this impossible as they interfere from every point of view. I therefore venture to hope that the Trustees will not disregard so serious a detriment to the work on which I have spared neither time thought nor labour.³⁹⁷

A series of events followed, ending with the removal of the gallery. About ten days after the Elliott painting was installed the Librarian was authorized to remove the spiral staircase leading to the gallery.³⁹⁸ In a December 1901 Trustees' Meeting, a letter submitted from Fox & Gale Architects presented a scheme for completely removing the gallery and relining the walls with bookcases.³⁹⁹ The Trustees approved, and the architect was instructed to begin work on December 13, 1901.⁴⁰⁰ The Fox & Gale drawings referred

to in the Trustees minutes are held in the BPL collection, and a plan drawing in the 1902 Trustees' Annual Report confirms that the gallery was removed in 1901 (fig. I-64).

Fixtures and Furnishings

An early photograph shows long rectangular wooden tables with two double shaded lights each filling the room. This same photograph shows sconces with upturned semicircular glass shades mounted on the pilasters separating the bookshelf sections.

Artwork

On March 17, 1901, the Elliott ceiling decoration "The Triumph of Time" was opened to the public for viewing. A concise explanation is found in the 1916 Handbook:

The painting contains thirteen winged figures. The twelve female figures represent the Hours, and the one male figure, Time. The Christian Centuries are typified by twenty horses arranged in five rows, of four each. In each row the two centre horses are side by side, and between these and the outer horses are two winged female figures representing Hours. On either side of the car in which is the figure of Time are the Hours of Life and Death. Seen from before the door of the Children's Room the design begins in the neighborhood of the nearer left hand corner, and describes a semi-circle, with a downward sweep over an effect of clouds, back to the left again, to a point about two-thirds across the canvas, and culminates in a disk, the sun, before which are the leading horse and the figure typifying the Twentieth Century. In the nearer right hand corner is a crescent moon with a full disk faintly showing. The decoration is divided in the centre by a beam, but notwithstanding this division, the composition is consecutive.⁴⁰¹

There was significant discussion regarding the framing of the Elliott painting, generally regarding the issue of cost and who would fund it. In June 1891, McKim wrote to Thomas A. Fox that he had received from Elliott a photograph, drawings, and a model of the frame he desired.

After a careful consideration of his design, and recognizing it as an excellent example of the form posed in the framing of Italian ceiling decoration, we commend it heartily to the Trustees ... In view of the existence of the girder, running through the centre of the ceiling, and the fact that a decoration of this size must be adequately framed, we hope that the Trustees will see their way clear to allowing Mr. Elliott, after nearly five years of labor, the sum necessary for the framing of his work.⁴⁰²

The Trustees solicited Harold Williams again to see if he could raise funds for the frame, but correspondence indicates that he declined to accept the responsibility, suggesting that Mrs. Barrett Wendell may be able to take on the cause.⁴⁰³ Mrs. Wendell and Charles G. Loring of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts began to help in fundraising, but the money must not have been raised by March 1900 because a letter from Abbott to Bowditch expressed that the least the Trustees could do is pay for an adequate frame.⁴⁰⁴

By November 1900, the Trustees had approved a frame in accordance with plans recommended by McKim and the money was “at hand” allowing the work to proceed.⁴⁰⁵

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

In the 1916 Handbook, the Patent Room is called the Teacher’s Reference Room, although the contents of the room may not have changed. The 1921 handbook says that the John Adams collection, formerly housed on the Special Library Floor, was kept behind chains on the upper shelves of the bookcases.⁴⁰⁶ Physically, few changes occurred in this room after the 1901 renovation. In 1927 it was repainted, and in 1929 new bookcases were installed.⁴⁰⁷

In the 1960s modernization, both the old Children’s Room and the Teacher’s Reference Room were slated to be the location for a new Music Department. The Teacher’s Reference Room was to become the repository for the Brown Music Collection formerly housed on the Special Library Floor.⁴⁰⁸ This was never done, but the Elliott room is labeled “Judaica” in a set of 1964 plans.

In 1968, when many changes were occurring in the library due to the demolition of the 1918 Blagden Street annex, the Elliott Room was used temporarily to house the Government Documents Department. It served this purpose until July 1974 when the Government Documents Department was relocated to the old Newspaper Room on the ground floor.⁴⁰⁹ At the end of the Summer of 1975, the Public card catalog was moved from the Abbey Room to the Elliott Room.

7.3.2.9 Newspaper Reading Room

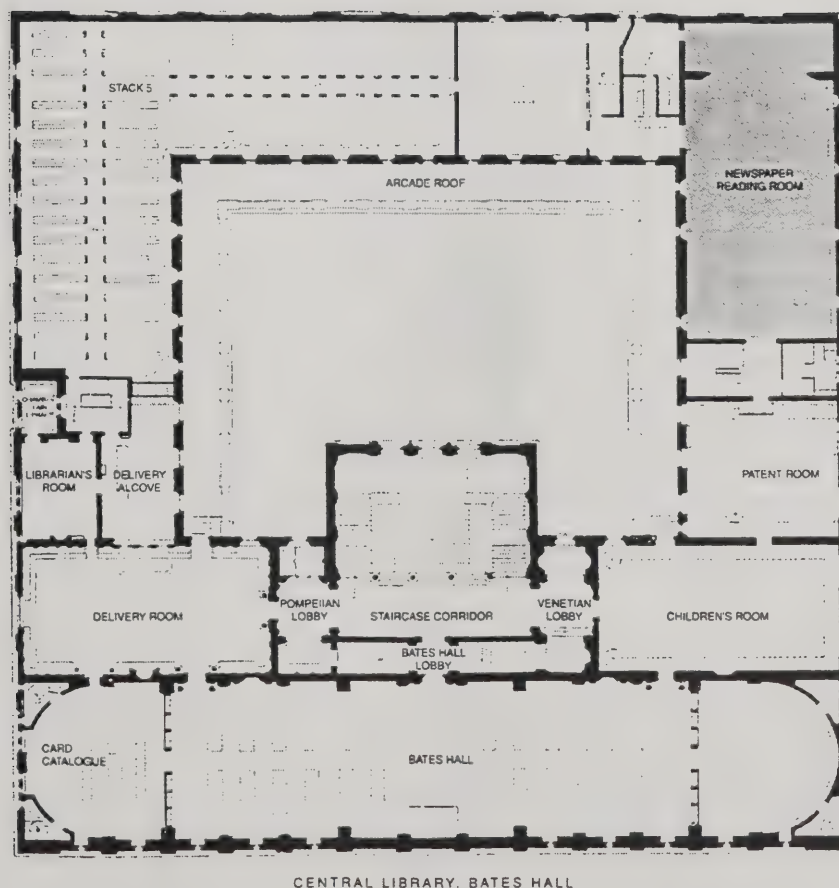
1990s Restoration Room No.
410

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Stacks
Monograph	Lecture Hall
1895	Newspaper Reading Room
1897	Newspaper Room
1898	Lecture Hall
1908	Lecture Hall
1916	Lecture Hall
1964	Lecture Hall
1975	Science Reference Department

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed 1895

Purpose

The room, originally intended to be a Lecture Hall, in the northwest corner of the 2nd floor, had a change of fate when a New Hampshire citizen, Mr. William C. Todd, offered the Library \$2,000 per year to be followed with \$50,000 later, expressly for the purchase of current newspapers. He expressed his interest in this endeavor and justified the need for a newspaper reading room in a letter to the Trustees dated June 16, 1893. He wrote:

Newspapers now form a large part of the reading of the whole community. I have heard businessmen say that they read the newspapers daily, occasionally a magazine, hardly a book in a year ... yet many newspapers are too expensive for ordinary readers, and a large part are desired only for occasional use.⁴¹⁰

At the time of the offer, there was no designated space in the Library building for newspaper reading, and Todd specified that a “suitable room” be furnished. Accordingly, the Lecture Hall space was re-designated as a Newspaper Reading Room.

Physical Description

Architectural Details, Finishes, Fixtures, and Furnishings

The Newspaper Room was officially opened to the public on May 3, 1895. It eventually housed a collection of local, national and international papers for all to peruse.⁴¹¹ The room was simply finished with terrazzo floors and a Guastavino arched ceiling of terra cotta tiles painted white. Newspapers were displayed on oak racks and there was a multitude of tables for casual reading.⁴¹² Other than these entries from the Trustees’ minutes and Small’s account, a description of the room is taken only from an illustration in the February 1895, *Boston Daily Globe* article contained in Appendix 11.6. Standing files ran around the perimeter of the room for upright reading. The room received natural light from four large arched windows on Boylston Street plus smaller windows at the floor level on its north wall and courtyard windows on its south wall. At least one large chandelier hung in the room and supplementary sconces were hung between the windows above the newspaper racks.

Library Alterations to 1909

Shortly after the Library opened to the public, additional furnishings were provided and the need for improvements in heating was discovered. In May 1896, Mellish, Byfield Company was hired to provide shelving for bound newspapers at a cost of \$3,533.⁴¹³

Heating had been a problem since the opening of the building. As early as 1896, the Trustees realized that additional heating would be required in the Special Library Floor and in the Newspaper Room and Bindery below. The Trustees' Annual Report of 1896 noted that 366 feet of radiating surface were added to this room. This repair afforded a great improvement according to the report that reads, "With these additions, there has been no difficulty in keeping a comfortable temperature in these rooms, part of which during last winter were at times uninhabitable."⁴¹⁴

In 1897 the Trustees contemplated the addition of a gallery or mezzanine level to house the patent collection.⁴¹⁵ The 1898 plans indicate that no gallery was built, but the Newspaper Room was moved to the northeast corner of the ground floor where the periodicals had previously been housed. The enclosure of the driveway on Boylston Street had provided interior space for an expansion of the Periodical Room into that space, leaving the large room in the corner for the newspaper collection. Incidentally, the patent collection was not put in the gallery of the new Newspaper Room. It was put in its own room in the west wing of the building (see "Statistical Department").⁴¹⁶

This transfer of the Newspaper Reading Room to the ground floor, once again made available the space in the northwest corner of the second floor for its original use as a Lecture Hall. Horace Wadlin wrote that the Lecture Hall was formally opened on May 17, 1899, with a program that included the unveiling and presentation of a bust of Walter Scott by the Westminster Committee on the Scott Memorial. In the following years free lectures were given on a variety of subjects from municipal administration methods to fine arts.⁴¹⁷ The Lecture Hall was accessed through its own entrance on Boylston Street.

Soon after the opening, the Trustees' Minutes recorded that authorization was given to the purchase of "50 sections of seats—3 seats in a section at \$1.50 per seat" for the hall.⁴¹⁸ Herbert Small, in his 1908 handbook, said the Lecture Hall could seat 300 people comfortably. He described it as lofty and well ventilated with a deep stage at its west end (fig. I-65).⁴¹⁹ Undated McKim drawings of the Lecture Hall have been found in the McKim Collection at the New York Historical Society, but it is unclear whether these were created for the original Lecture Hall or the 1898 Lecture Hall. Even if they are the original drawings, it is possible that they were re-used to transform the room back to this purpose.⁴²⁰

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

Documentation suggests that few major changes were made in the Lecture Hall between 1898 and 1953. A record in the Trustees' Annual Report for 1911 indicates that the walls were washed and re-tinted. By 1921, the Trustees say that ventilation is "criminally bad" and the Hall is "distressingly dingy," but improvements were deemed impossible.⁴²¹ In

1924, however, ventilation was improved by the installation of a ten horsepower air-washing machine with electric fan and the appropriate connections with air shafts.⁴²² In 1926 the Lecture Hall received a thorough renovation including cleaning, the installation of new stage draperies, and the addition of emergency exit lights.⁴²³ Further improvements, were made in 1928, including the addition of a new moving picture booth and equipment, a new screen and stage curtain, and acoustical draperies. In addition, lighting, both general and on the stage was improved (fig. I-66).⁴²⁴ A July 1947 Ames, Child & Graves drawing, revised in November of the same year by American Architectural Iron Company also indicates the addition of a fire escape from the Lecture Hall.⁴²⁵

In his 1953 “modernization” campaign, Milton Lord planned to make a “virtually new hall” in the space that he stated, “has long needed to be improved.”⁴²⁶ He did not describe the extent of the improvements except for the installation of a mezzanine floor to house small meeting rooms and conference rooms, and the addition of a kitchen “to permit a greater variety of library uses under increasingly pleasant conditions.”⁴²⁷ A study drawing made by Ames, Child & Graves in January 22, 1953, illustrated the changes proposed.⁴²⁸ The drawing was revised several times that year as well.

In March 1975, the Science Reference Department was moved into the Lecture Hall, thus ceasing its previous function.

7.3.2.10 1898 Patent Room

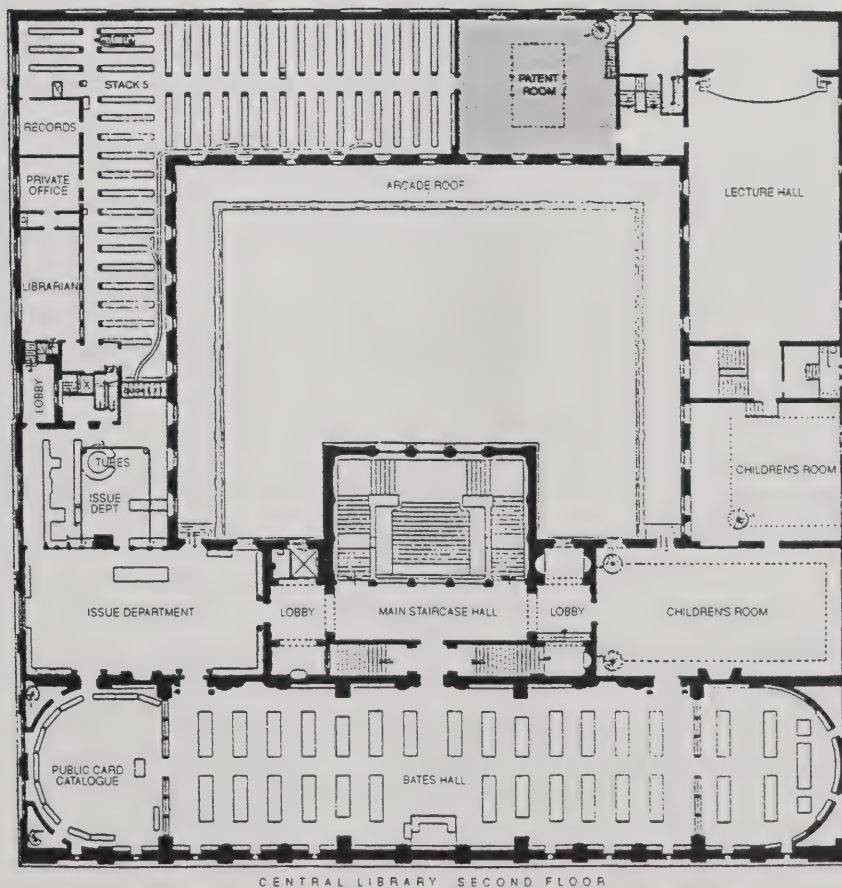
1990s Restoration Room No.
414

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Stacks
Monograph	Not labeled
1895	Not mentioned
1897	#7
1898	Patent Room
1902	Statistical Department
1908	Statistical Department
1959	Documents & Statistics
1964	Government Documents & Social Sciences

Plan as built in 1898

N→



Library as Completed in 1895

The room, which became the Patent Room and Statistical Department in 1898, had no identified function when the Library opened in 1895. The room is not described in any of the historical accounts of the library primarily because it was not open to the public, and probably was not a finished space.

Library Alterations to 1909

Purpose

In 1898, the patent collection was moved from its room on the north side of the 2nd floor (Elliott Room) to a similar sized room in the 2nd floor west wing. The room could be reached from the courtyard and from the Special Library Floor. At this time the Statistical Department was also contained in this room. The Statistical Department contained the collection of American Statistical Association. In addition, Small's 1908 handbook reports that manuscripts and broadsides were also kept in this room.⁴²⁹

Physical Description

Architectural Details, Finishes, Fixtures, and Furnishings

On June 16, 1898, Smith & Lovett were contracted for ironwork, presumably to build the new galleries illustrated in drawings by Jenney & Fox.⁴³⁰ In addition to the first gallery, a second gallery was built at the level of Stack 6. A circular staircase extended from the main level of the Statistical Room up to the second gallery. The first level gallery was deep enough on two sides to have rows of bookcases coming out perpendicularly from the wall instead of flush against it. A photograph of the room, taken after the gallery was installed, showed bookcases covering the walls below and on the gallery floor (fig. I-67). When the galleries were added, the lower level of the room was extended north to the staircase wall, the windows were relocated, and their size was reduced to make room for the installation of additional windows. Rectangular wooden tables with double-armed lamps, like those in Bates Hall, were placed on the main level. Small windows on both the west side and courtyard side of the room naturally lit the room.

In 1902, the Patent Collection was moved again from this room to the former Bindery and Printing Rooms on the ground floor (fig. I-89). This led to several physical changes. In 1903, the room was refitted and 60 additional electric lamps were installed.⁴³¹ In March of the same year a contract was executed for shelving in the Statistical Department.⁴³² No photos have been found illustrating the room at this point in time.

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

In 1925, when many alterations were made possible in the Library due to increased appropriations, major changes were made in the Statistical Department. The second gallery was floored over to provide extra space for the Fine Arts Department cabinets. New lights were also installed.⁴³³ In 1926, the room was cleaned and “decorated.”⁴³⁴

In 1929, new bookcases were installed, and in 1931 lighting was improved by the substitution of holophane units for drop cord lights.⁴³⁵

The Examining Committee Report for 1932 recommended that the Statistical Department be moved to a “more convenient and suitable location.”⁴³⁶ The 1953 modernization planned to put a Religion-Philosophy-Psychology Department in the quarters to be vacated by the Statistical Department, but this change was never made. The 1964 plans indicate that the room was used for the Government Documents & Social Sciences.

7.3.3 Special Library Floor

As shown on the Heliotype plans, the third floor of the Boston Public Library Building was originally designed by McKim to be the location of special collections and small departmental libraries. These early plans show a series of rooms situated en suite around the north, west and south sides of the building with a continuous nine-foot wide corridor running along the courtyard side. Entrance to the rooms was either through the corridor or from room to room (fig. H-8). A perspective rendering of McKim's vision of the West Gallery corridor indicates that its walls were to be adorned with a series of heavily modeled pilasters supporting barrel vaulted arches and groin vaulted ceiling bays. The inner wall is ornamented with a decorative chairrail and pedimented windows interspersed with doors leading to the Special Collection Rooms. Free standing sculptures and busts are periodically placed throughout the corridor (fig. H-14). The individual rooms are of two basic types. Those toward the front of the building (east) are drawn as open spaces free of bookcases, but those around the have rear built-in bookshelves projecting into the center from the side walls. Each room, except two designated as "Reserved," is specifically designated for a particular collection or classification of books.

The Heliotypes also confirm that McKim planned for these rooms to be decorated as elaborately as those on the Bates Hall Floor. A McKim rendering of proposed Barton Library shows the vaulted ceiling and wall lunettes entirely covered with decorative paint and possibly raised plaster ornament (fig. H-5). Although very little of this decoration was executed on the Special Library Floor, references to it are scattered throughout the accounts of the library construction. At an informal dinner in May 1890, McKim, Abbey, Sargent, and Augustus St. Gaudens discussed the various opportunities for special library commissions. In a letter to Abbott, McKim recounted the discussion:

After dinner, the plans of the Library were spread out and the mural possibilities of the walls and ceilings of the halls and galleries forming the special library collections discussed. Abbey was vastly interested in the Shakespeare collection while Sargent's interest in the direction of Spanish literature was almost a natural one...⁴³⁷

McKim also assured Abbott not to be concerned about the cost of hiring these notable artists to provide the Library with their services:

Of course we do not expect anything from the City, but I am convinced that any space which you may see fit to allot to Abbey and to Sargent can be paid for privately. *I already have some promising assurances of this!*⁴³⁸

The cost, it seems, eventually did prevent these and other decorations on the Special Library Floor from being executed. In a letter to John LaFarge, regarding LaFarge's

proposal for decorating the “Architectural Library” (as built Music Library), McKim admitted difficulty in finding funds for the job. In response to a letter from LaFarge wondering whether his proposal is still being considered, McKim wrote:

In regard to the decoration for the Architectural Library I will do what I can ... I can only regret once more that you had not reached this decision in Mr. Ames's lifetime; for all will be more difficult now than then. To him we looked for a large part of the financial support; and how it will shape itself now I cannot tell until I have seen Mr. Sargent.⁴⁰

The only two rooms constructed from McKim's original design are in the east wing, the top level of the Bates Hall Reading Room, and the room above the Grand Staircase. As built, the floor had a large vaulted hall at the top of a straight flight of stairs leading up from the Venetian Lobby. At the center of the west wall of the hall, up five steps, there was a room designated the Music Library. There were identical domed rooms at the north and south ends of the hall. The north room was called the Barton-Ticknor Library, named for the donors of the collections it housed. It led to a long open reading room spanning the full width of the building that housed a variety of special collections in the alcoves on the outer wall. The south domed room was the Fine Arts Library, that led to the Fine Arts Reading Room, spanning half the width of the building. About halfway down the south wing, through a wide door, this narrower reading room opened up to a full width configuration identical to that of the north wing. The entire length of the west wing was another full width reading room with alcoves housing more special collections.

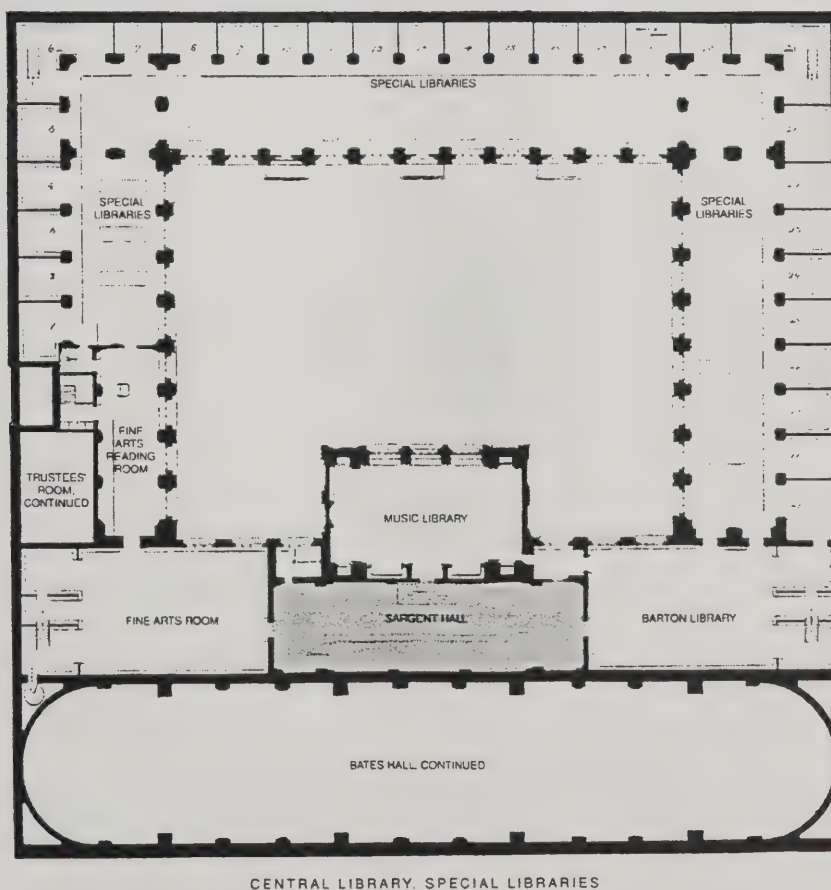
7.3.3.1 Sargent Hall

1990s Restoration Room No.
702a, 703

Use/Name Changes of Room
1895 to present Sargent Hall

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed 1895

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

From the Venetian Lobby on the Bates Hall Floor runs a long straight staircase leading to the two-story hall on the Special Library Floor. The hall, now called the Sargent Gallery for the painter who decorated it with wall and ceiling murals, is the entry point into all of the Special Libraries. As built, the staircase had walls of Amherst sandstone, treads and risers of Yorkshire sandstone, and a railing of Alps green marble. A landing halfway up the staircase contained a door to a balcony affording a view of Bates Hall from the second level of the grand vaulted space. In the stair hangs an Amherst stone tablet dedicated to McKim. A testimonial to McKim is carved in recessed letters outlined in gold. It states:

Charles Follen McKim
1847-1909

Faithful servant of the arts
Incomparable friend to youth
Honored master of his profession
In this building enduringly is revealed
the splendid amplitude of his genius
an inspiration to all men.

Sargent Hall is a two-story space, 84-feet long by 23-feet wide (figs. I-68, I-69, D-23). The floor was of Yorkshire sandstone, and the wainscot and stair balustrade were built of Amherst sandstone. The walls above the wainscot were of white plaster. The vaulted plaster ceiling rested on piers dividing the wall into panels and had three large rectangular skylights admitting the only natural light into the space. At each end of the hall and in the center of the west wall were doors leading to the special libraries. Each door surround was also constructed of Amherst sandstone.

The elevator was on the west wall, and another door symmetrically placed at the other end of the west wall led to a small space called a lobby. This space connected the Music Room to the Barton Library. There was no real need for a “lobby” in this location, as one could enter both of these rooms from the hall. It seems that this small room was created by virtue of McKim’s strict adherence to a symmetrical plan.

Fixtures and Furnishings

Three large skylights provided natural light for the hall. Wall sconces designed by Sargent supplied additional lighting.

There were no furnishings in the hall.

Artwork: John Singer Sargent Murals “The Triumph of Religion”

At a dinner with McKim, Abbey, and St. Gaudens, John Singer Sargent had expressed interest in decorating the special library for the Spanish Literature collection, but he was ultimately contracted to paint the Special Library Hall. Primarily a portraitist, Sargent was an interesting choice for the commission. The 1895 BPL Handbook relates that Sargent was commissioned around 1890 for the end walls of the hall, and there is correspondence dating to 1892 regarding specifics of his design. However, his first contract was not officially signed until 1893. The contract, dated January 18, 1893, indicated that for a fee of \$15,000, Sargent was to provide:

...a series of mural decorative paintings for the space above the height of the door at the two ends of the Special Library Hall ... including the whole of the two ends of the Hall and the Side walls and barrel vault to the first pilasters, a distance of about eight feet four inches.⁴⁴⁰

Sargent’s proposal describes his scheme “The Triumph of Religion,” as a portrayal of certain stages of Jewish and Christian history.⁴⁴¹ Sargent’s scheme for the end walls was not confined to the flat walls, themselves. Correspondence with McKim indicates that he actually had a part in the design of the three dimensional architectural details of the space. He negotiated with McKim to change certain details, and actually redesigned elements to accommodate his mural design. For example, Sargent pleaded with McKim to provide a “very accentuated projection at the top of the wainscot” to support the plinth he would create on which his painted prophets would stand. Sargent wrote:

...I feel that building up my prophets in this manner is a great feature in my decoration, and I beg you not to let them be flat on the wall without plinth or moulding below to accentuate their living and realistic character.⁴⁴²

Sargent’s scheme, incorporating low reliefs and three-dimensional gold ornaments, was “a distinct departure from traditions of mural painting,”⁴⁴³ inciting mixed views among the critics. After portions of the north wall composition were exhibited at the Royal Academy in England in 1894, an article in the *Gazette* reviewed them positively:

Undoubtedly, the achievement of this year’s exhibition is the great lunette and section of a ceiling exhibited by Mr. J. S. Sargent, and hung in Gallery No. VI. It is an important piece of decorative painting enriched with gold and gilded ornament in relief, and in places, with jewels. It represents in vivid allegory the opposing circumstances under which early religion developed itself ... It is impossible, in a short notice, to do justice to the wealth of thought displayed in this magnificent piece of decoration, in which a very daring treatment has solved a very difficult problem.⁴⁴⁴

Walker, however, posed a skeptical view, in his article about the BPL:

It is reported that Mr. Sargent, finding his almost fatal facility of brush inadequate to express the power of his conception, proposes to model certain portions of his work in relief. It is hoped this is not the case. Sculpture and painting can be associated, but scarcely fused with success ... the very position of decorative wall painting requires that it shall be kept flat.⁴⁴⁵

The murals for the north end of the hall were installed in the spring of 1895 to such positive reviews that another \$15,000 was raised to commission Sargent to paint other parts of the hall, including the ceiling and the wall above the staircase.⁴⁴⁶ A review in *Scribner's Magazine* relates that the style of these murals was similar to that of Sargent's portraiture. Russell Sturgis wrote that they were:

...painted in the brilliant, swift, vigorous, dashing way which students of Sargent's portraits know well and would hardly fail to understand ... the general character of the treatment, in the portraits and in the decoration at the north end, is the same.⁴⁴⁷

This first composition, made up of a frieze, lunette, and arched ceiling panel, is part of the Hebrew portion of Sargent's composition. The ceiling panel is dominated by the figure of the goddess, Nut (Neith), the "All Mother," whose figure spans the entire width of the ceiling. She wears an Egyptian headdress composed of a globe with black and gold wings in relief, and the moon rises above her. An Adonis (archer) fights a serpent, in relief, wrapped around the goddess' neck; on one side he is victorious, and on the other he is defeated. Nut is flanked by Moloch, the god of the sun and Astarte, goddess of the moon, each portrayed with traditional symbols of their rule.⁴⁴⁸

The lunette illustrates the victory of monotheism over polytheism. The foreground shows the Jews who bow before the Egyptian and Assyrian kings and ask for supplication from the Lord who looms above in the background. The Egyptian Pharaoh is on the left, portrayed as is conventional in Egyptian art with his head and legs in profile and body and arms square to the plane of the picture. His clothing is traditionally Egyptian in style and decorated by Sargent with highlights of gold leaf. The Assyrian king wears a heavy robe, his beard and hair arranged in formal ringlets. Herbert Small notes that the sculptural quality of Sargent's portrayal resembles that typical of Assyrian bas reliefs. Slain victims of the kings are piled up in the background, trampled by a lion on the Assyrian side and the Sphinx on the Egyptian side. Cherubim with crimson wings fly in front of Jehovah who lifts his arms to restrain the two kings.⁴⁴⁹

The frieze is located beneath a projecting cornice below the lunette and contains Sargent's portrayal of Moses and the Hebrew prophets. Moses, executed completely in relief, is in the center of the composition holding up the ten commandments. He is dressed in a formal robe, while the prophets around him are portrayed in loose fitting

robes. Moses is flanked on the left by Elijah and on the right by Joshua. Above Moses are the golden wings of the Spirit.

After only this wall was finished, Ernest F. Fenollosa in his essay, *Mural Painting in the Boston Public Library*, praised Sargent saying, “in his treatment of the prophets Sargent proves himself absolute master. He stands side by side with the greatest creators of all times.” Clearly impressed, he continued:

This wonderful experiment of Sargent’s must penetrate American opinion like an irrigating flood, and stimulate directly and indirectly a long series of splendid native works: so that some day, when its walls are filled by his epoch-making achievement, this gallery shall have become, like of old the Brancacci chapel at Florence, a shrine for the pilgrimage of artists.⁴⁵⁰

Library Alterations to 1909

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

Nothing notable was done architecturally between the Library opening and 1908.

Fixtures and Furnishings

Heating apparatus was added to improve the heating capacity for the entire floor. Frederic Tudor and Walworth Construction & Supply company provided specifications and estimates. Both Tudor and Walworth executed contracts in 1896.⁴⁵¹

Those examining the murals in 1903 criticized the lighting. Russell Sturgis wrote,

The hall itself is not very successfully lighted. Small and unarchitectural skylights in the curve of the vault above succeed one another throughout the length of the gallery, and the result is a somewhat confused series of lightings from different points, the rays impinging upon the painted wall at very different angles, while none directly from the sky can reach the upper part of the picture, in either case.⁴⁵²

No changes were reported at this time to improve the lighting, but the lighting issue continued throughout the years.

Artwork: John Singer Sargent Murals “The Triumph of Religion”

In 1902 and 1903, Sargent’s second set of murals was installed at the south end of Sargent Hall. “The Dogma of Redemption” was Sargent’s portrayal of Christianity (fig. I-68). Sylvester Baxter’s account in the *Boston Herald* called this composition “rich and delicately

soft as ancient tapestry.”⁴⁵³ It was Byzantine in character with rich gilding and ornamentation and dull blues, reds, and yellows as dominant colors. The difference between this decoration and the first installation on the north end was noted in a magazine account by Russell Sturgis.

This is what the student will do who enters Sargent Hall now that both the end walls have received their decorations. He will go with the delight of a satisfied lover of mural painting from the north end to the south, from the older work to the newer, from the more informal and swift technique to the compact and severe design, the pervading harmony of thought, and the unsurpassed decorative sense, which are embodied in the newer decoration.⁴⁵⁴

The focal point of the wall was the crucifix, in relief, spanning the border between the lunette and the frieze. On the crucifix, Sargent painted the dead figure of Christ flanked by Adam and Eve. He painted Adam and Eve kneeling in rigid poses, each holding up a chalice that collects Christ’s blood as redemption. Above the cross was the inscription “Remissa Sunt Pecatta Mundi”—“The sins of the world have been remitted.”

The lunette contained the portrayal of the trinity. Three figures were seated in one throne with a single red cloak around them all. Their identical faces were in low relief, and each was crowned with a different crown representing the three attributes of divinity. The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, doves with cruciform numbers “radiated” around the crucifix and perimeter of the lunette.

In the frieze Sargent portrayed eight angels, “the bearers of the Instruments of the Passion.” The two angels nearest to the cross are modeled in relief. At the foot of the cross are a pelican feeding its young and a serpent in which Adam’s feet are entangled. The cornice separating the frieze and lunette contains an inscription taken from the semidome of the apse in the Cathedral of Cefalu in Sicily, which Sargent apparently studied as a model for this composition. The inscription reads “Factus Homo, Factor Hominis, Factique Redemptor. Corporeus Redimo Corpora Corda Deus”—“I, the maker of man, being made man and redeemed of that which I have made incarnate redeem the body and as God redeem the soul.”⁴⁵⁵

The ceiling vault and first bay of this end were not included in this installation as they were in the north end. As of September 1903, an account in *Scribner’s Magazine* related that “studies for [the ceiling band and bay walls] are in an advanced state.”⁴⁵⁶ By October 1915, Sargent had finished this section, and it was installed in 1916.⁴⁵⁷

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

As part of Sargent's comprehensive scheme for the hall, he designed decorative plaster ornament for the lunettes and the ceiling. This decoration will be discussed below. The flat wall surfaces, left without murals or architectural treatment, were simply painted in a stone color with borders of red, olive, and gray.

Fixtures and Furnishings

The first mention of the bookcases, which are now on the west wall of Sargent Hall, was found in the 1916 BPL handbook. They were illustrated in drawings that appear to be produced by Fox & Gale Architects (fig. D-24).⁴⁵⁸ They are not shown in McKim's drawings of the Hall (fig. D-23).⁴⁵⁹ It was said that the bookcases imparted "to the room the distinctive library note."⁴⁶⁰ These decoratively modeled dark wooden bookcases were inset into the wall above the dado on either side of the door to the Music Library (fig. I-69). They were modeled with details similar to those of the frames on the opposite wall.

In 1930 a new ornamental lantern and reflector was added to the staircase leading to Sargent Hall. Plans, dated 1947 and 1953, detail a new lighting layout for Sargent Hall. The most significant change was the enclosure of the skylights that resulted in the replacement of natural light with fluorescent lamps and reflectors. The drawing called for 72-inch long Deluxe white fluorescent lamps and reflectors to be installed behind 2-inch by 2-inch egg crate louver. In addition, it called for picture spots on the east wall, reflector strips on the west wall, and reflector strips inside the bookcases.

The same drawing also detailed movable exhibition cases that were to be placed under the bookcases on the west wall and in locations on the north and south walls. These cases had solid bronze frames and glass tops.

Artwork: John Singer Sargent Murals "The Triumph of Religion"

After installing the end murals, the hall seemed bare, so Sargent included decorative plaster modifications in his scheme for the side walls and ceiling. He took on the task of embellishing the ceiling vaults with decorative plaster moldings in the forms of beads, guilloche, undulate bands, scoop patterns, and elaborate leaf patterns. Among changes he made were: extension of the lines of the pilasters forming decorative ribs across the vaulted ceiling, deepening the pilasters, and the addition of relief ornament to the

lunettes and edge of the skylights. Structural modifications were necessary to execute some of these decorative additions.⁴⁶¹ Of this architectural ornament, Sargent wrote:

I have tried to make a good selection of Renaissance ornament throughout and not do anything that would irritate the ghost of McKim. With the exception of some hints and warnings from a Belgian refugee, and architect of the name of Adrien Blomme, I have not consulted any architects, as I felt that Messrs. Gale & Fox were the only ones that I ought to consult.⁴⁶²

Sargent's alterations were some of the most significant departures from McKim's design undertaken after his death. Sargent's admitted consideration of McKim's design sensibilities was notable.

Correspondence indicates that the Trustees were getting anxious for Sargent to complete the work of his contract because almost 20 years had passed since its execution. Taking on the responsibility of creating architectural detail for the hall surely contributed to Sargent's tardiness in finishing, and in April 1914 Sargent wrote a letter of explanation to the Trustees. In the letter, he apologized for taking so long and assured them that he was working diligently on the lunettes. He explained that he wanted to send them together with the three large east wall panels for the full impact.⁴⁶³

Shortly after this correspondence, Edward Robinson, then curator of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, assured the Trustees that Sargent could be trusted and that he was working seven out of twelve months a year to complete the BPL commission. Robinson had actually visited Sargent, and could personally vouch for the fact that his work was progressing. Robinson wrote to the Trustees, "Indeed, it was largely if not wholly owing to his interest in [the BPL murals] that he gave up portrait painting several years ago, which—as he told me—he found too great an interruption."⁴⁶⁴ That Sargent was willing to completely sacrifice his portrait painting career, for which he became famous, must have been assurance to the Trustees that Sargent would fulfill his contract with them.⁴⁶⁵

In 1916, in preparation for the installation of the lunettes, repairs were made around and upon the skylights.⁴⁶⁶ Sargent's murals for the ceiling vault in the South end, the six lunettes, and the ceiling medallions were installed that year. The prevailing tones of these new additions were reds, greens, blues, and grays. As in the end walls, gold was used generously to highlight both the paintings and the architectural ornament.

Sargent's architectural endeavors in the hall received praise when the entire scheme was finally installed. The 1916 Handbook said, "... Mr. Sargent has recognized the importance of architectural detail as an essential of monumental decoration." Of the gold relief ornament on the ceiling, it continued, "The gold ornament thus designed, in

contrast with the soft cool grays that bespeak the fundamental quality of the walls and ceiling, sets off the mural paintings with a richly harmonious setting.”⁴⁶⁷

The ceiling vault of the south end of the hall contained three groups representing the mysteries of the Rosary: The five Joyful Mysteries, the five Sorrowful Mysteries, and the five Glorious Mysteries. The Joyful and Sorrowful Mysteries on either side of the vault were in heavily modeled and gilded frames. The Glorious Mysteries in the center of the vault was a low relief gold medallion. Outside the panels of the mysteries, were the emblems of the four evangelists, the figure of Eve, Greek letters, the figure of Adam, and the “Good Shepherd.” On the wall surfaces in the first bay from the end, Sargent painted the figures of the Madonna and Child (east) and the Madonna of Sorrows (west). The Madonna of Sorrows stood on a crescent moon behind a screen of lighted candles in relief.⁴⁶⁸

There were six lunettes, three on each side of the hall. Three represented Hebrew themes, and the other three represented Christian themes. On the Hebrew side, the lunettes represent “The Law,” “Gog and Magog,” and “The Messianic Era.” On the Christian side, they are “The Judgment,” “Hell,” and “The Passing of Souls into Heaven.”⁴⁶⁹

The ceiling medallions over the lunettes were also painted and modeled by Sargent. Above the middle lunette on the Hebrew side was the Ark of the Covenant. The modeled ornament above the medallion was an ox’s head as a burnt offering. Above “Gog & Magog,” there was a sacrificial goat in the medallion and a seven-branched candlestick atop. Above “The Messianic Era” there was a seven-branched candlestick in the medallion and modeled musical instruments above that. On the Christian side, above “Judgment” in the medallion was the Triple Crown and crossed Keys of St. Peter. Above that was a modeled Crown and Palms of Martyrdom. Above “The Passing of Souls into Heaven” there was a Byzantine design of two peacocks drinking from a vase and a modeled Tabernacle of the Eucharist with the wafer. Above “Hell” there was the “I.H.S.,” and a modeled Chalice of the Eucharist.⁴⁷⁰

At the time of publication of the 1916 handbook, the paintings for the east wall were not yet installed, but the architectural treatment of the walls was finished. There were blue frames with gold accents modeled onto the wall, but they were filled with drapery where the murals eventually would be placed. The blue of the frames coordinated well with the cool gray tones of the stone walls and floor.⁴⁷¹ The two paintings, “The Church” and “The Synagogue,” were uncovered on Sunday, October 5, 1919.⁴⁷² Although Sargent had originally proposed to put a mural in the center panel of the west wall, this was never executed. “The Synagogue” in a medieval depiction, is portrayed as a blind and dethroned woman symbolizing the medieval church’s belief that the synagogue had “forfeited its high place [as the forerunner of Christianity] through its failure to recognize

the claim of Christ as the expected Messiah.” “The Church” is a hooded woman looking triumphant, having gained the vision and leadership lost by the Jews.⁴⁷³

Although Sargent’s advocates maintained that the depiction of the synagogue was a historic medieval portrayal, the Synagogue painting caused a significant amount of controversy among local and national Jewish constituents. The vision of a fallen, blindfolded woman was seen as a negative misrepresentation of the religion and its institution. The main argument of most groups was that this representation was to be put in a public location funded by public money. Several groups such as the Council of Jewish Women and the Central Conference of American Rabbis protested the display of this painting. An excerpt from the statement sent by the American Rabbis group explained the reasoning:

...The Executive Board of the Central Conference of American Rabbis in regular session assembled, while admitting that the artist has a perfect right, nay, it is his duty, to set down in a pictorial way, his conception of life, however biased and false it may seem to others, yet it asserts that such a presentation of the Synagogue is contrary to fact and therefore unjust. It urges that inasmuch as the picture will hurt a large section of the Community in their tenderest susceptibilities and deepest convictions, it should not appear in a public institution supported by public taxation. Above all, it protests against anything with such a clear sectarian bias being given the stamp of approval by a public institution.⁴⁷⁴

The City of Boston Law Department ruled, however, that the panel could not be legally removed because it was installed by a charitable trust and could only be modified if the trust could not be carried out. The circumstances did not warrant a modification of the trust.⁴⁷⁵

Sargent died before completing the entire scheme he had proposed, the only missing part being the central panel of the west wall. A period of twenty-five years had elapsed from the time the first installation on the north wall was made until the final two west wall panels were installed. Sargent’s style changed noticeably from one installation to the next as evidenced by several critical accounts. The 1921 BPL handbook explains,

Few such records of the progressive development of an artist, engaged upon a single theme exist anywhere in the world; this room is the expression of the life-work of one of the greatest painters of modern times.⁴⁷⁶

In February 1924, “The Synagogue” was damaged by a citizen who threw ink on it. A report was presented to the Trustees by Mr. H. E. Thompson of the Museum of Fine Arts in which he submitted a proposal for the removal of the ink without damage to the picture.⁴⁷⁷

Cleaning of the Sargent murals became an issue shortly after the final installation. As early as 1933, the Examining Committee noted that the Sargent paintings needed attention recommending that they should be cleaned or treated.⁴⁷⁸ An undated letter to the Mayor of Boston, probably from the 1940s, related:

I went to see the Sargent frescoes in the BPL, I remember having seen them 40 years ago, not long after Mr. Sargent had painted them.

They were so fine and the colour was beautiful in those days. Now I cannot say if the colours have faded or whether smoke and dirt have covered them but they have lost their colour & brilliance. It is a great loss to Boston, and I am hoping you will be able to do something about it.⁴⁷⁹

In response to this letter, the Assistant to the Director of the Library notified the Mayor that:

We shall indeed wish to do something to accomplish a cleaning of these murals within the period immediately ahead in order that we may come to the beginning of the observance of our centennial Anniversary with them in good condition. The last cleaning of the Sargent paintings was done in 1940 under the technical direction of the Art commission of the City of Boston.

We are at present time looking forward to improvement in the lighting of the Central Library building, following a complete & extensive lighting thus afforded it will be necessary to make certain that all of the mural paintings themselves are in as clean and pristine a condition as possible.⁴⁸⁰

Although no records of the 1950s cleaning have been found, a letter criticizing a cleaning job indicated that they were cleaned, albeit poorly. Mr. R. H. Ives Gammell, in a letter of resignation from the BPL Centennial Committee, cited the inadequate cleaning job of the murals as the main reason for his resignation. He expressed his disapproval, thus:

I have just visited the Sargent Hall where I was horrified to find that substantial portions of these superb decorations have been, in my opinion, damaged beyond possibility of repair. The full extent of the damage may perhaps be apparent since they were first unveiled in 1916. However, anyone comparing their present appearance with the photographs available at the library can hardly fail to be shocked by the changes which have taken place in many important areas notable in three of the small lunettes which have been to all intents and purposes ruined.⁴⁸¹

A final reference to conservation of the murals was found in the 1983–84 Annual Report that said, “In the opinion of many art experts, the murals by John Singer Sargent were almost destroyed by previous efforts at restoration.”⁴⁸²

A report prepared by the Center for Conservation & Technical Studies, Harvard University Art Museums in 1986 reported that the Sargent paintings were in structurally good condition with a “disfiguring layer of dirt on the surface” as well as extensive loose dust and grime.

7.3.3.2 Music Library

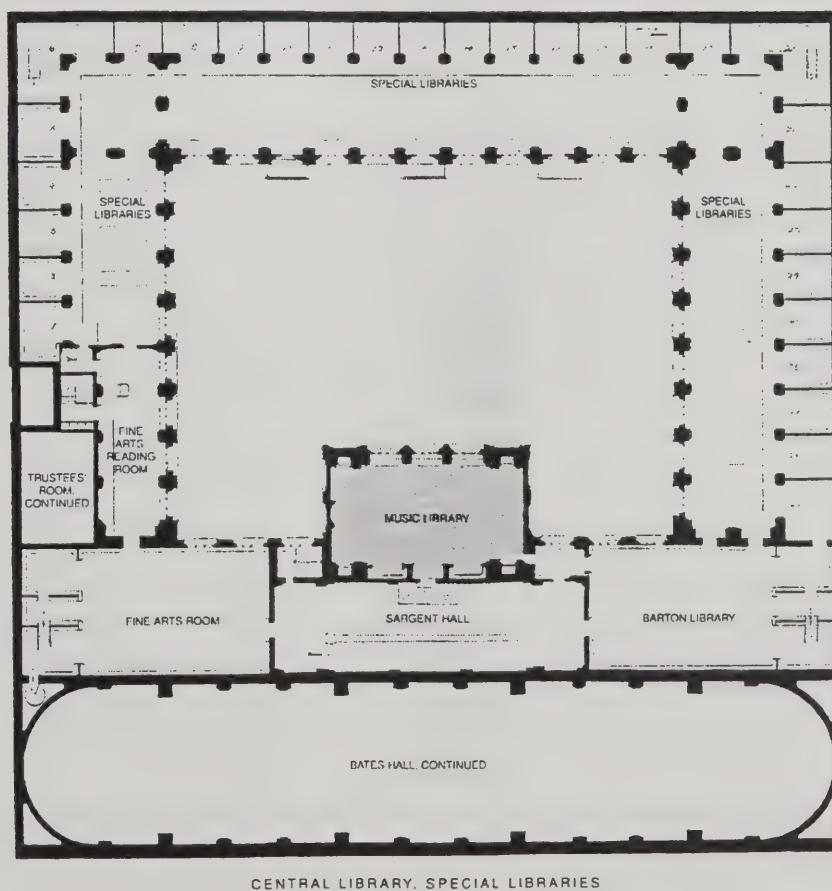
1990s Restoration Room No.
704

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Art Room
Early plans	Architecture Library
Monograph	No plan
1895	Music Library
1897	Music Room
1898	Music Library
1908	Music
1916	Music Room
1929	Treasure Room
1964	Treasure Room

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed 1895

Purpose

The earliest references to this room indicated that McKim originally intended it to be an Architectural Library dedicated to the memory of Trinity Church architect, H. H. Richardson. Reportedly, the plan was for several architects in Boston to decorate the room that would house the Library's architectural holdings. It is assumed that this plan was abandoned in 1894 when Bostonian, Allen A. Brown, donated his collection of music books and scores to the Library. The earliest floor plans that designate the room as "Music Library" date to 1895.⁴⁸³ Herbert Small described the collection of over 15,000 volumes as "the most complete musical library in the country, rich in rare scores, and containing a great amount of historical and biographical material."⁴⁸⁴ Garnsey related that the collection included over 200 original operatic scores including a complete set of Wagner's operas.⁴⁸⁵ In addition to books and scores, the collection also included American and foreign musical magazines and periodicals.⁴⁸⁶

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

Entered up a flight of five steps in the center of the west wall of the Sargent Hall, the Music Library, as built, had a low vaulted ceiling with arches supported by pilasters. The walls and arches were finished in white plaster. Small indicated that the plain walls would "probably sometime be covered with decoration," but in photographs, it appears that the only decoration was a decorative color scheme differentiating the walls from the other details.⁴⁸⁷ Coffers with rosettes adorned both the large arches at the north and south sides, and the smaller arches over the windows and niches on the east and west sides. On the south wall there was a Siena marble mantle with a frieze ornamented with low relief lions and bears (fig. I-70).

Fixtures and Furnishings

The room was well lit by the three arched windows facing the court on its east wall. Shades were put on these windows at an early phase in the room's history. An early, but undated, photograph shows a chandelier hanging from the center of the ceiling and standard double armed table lamps on the reading tables (fig. I-72). There were also wall sconces mounted onto the pilasters.

The reading tables were long, oak tables with ornamental feet, similar to those in Bates Hall. Windsor chairs were placed around the tables. Plain wooden bookshelves were

placed around the perimeter of the room and extended into the center of the room from the sides. It appears that some of the bookshelves were stained a natural wood color and some were painted white. There were also several wooden card catalogue cases throughout the room (fig. I-71).

Library Alterations to 1909

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

The 1905 Annual Report said that the room was “entirely renovated under the direction of the Library’s painter.”⁴⁸⁸ It is assumed that this means that the room was repainted, and possibly small repairs were made to the plaster if needed. No major architectural changes were made in this period.

Fixtures and Furnishings

No changes were reported in the fixtures or furnishings.

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

Purpose

The room served its original purpose as a Music Library until 1929 when it was transformed into the “Treasure Room.” In 1925, prompted by reports on the fire safety of the Library’s collections, the Examining Committee requested the creation of a room to protect the rarest items.⁴⁸⁹ As its name suggests, the Treasure Room was reserved for the storage of the most valuable holdings of the library, such as the first five folios of Shakespeare and the Bay Psalm Book, reportedly the earliest book printed in the American colonies.⁴⁹⁰ It was no longer used as a reading room, but more as an exhibition space to view these old books. To secure the collection, the room was retrofitted with the protective cases and fireproofing as discussed below (fig. I-73). The Brown Music collection was moved into the former Barton Ticknor Room at the north end of Sargent Hall.⁴⁹¹

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

Significant changes were made in 1929 to convert the room into a fireproof repository. All wooden bookcases were removed and steel and bronze “inclusive wall cases” were installed. These cases were inset into the walls, their glass paned doors allowing the reader to view the titles of the books inside. The drawings also indicated that two fire resistant cases were installed.⁴⁹² The reading tables were removed, and free standing permanent exhibition cases were installed. These cases had a base of pink Tennessee marble with steel (painted to look like oak) lockable storage cabinets in the bottom, and glass enclosed viewing cases at the top. All of these steel bookcases and exhibition cabinets are still extant in the room. A 1928 drawing also details changes in the stone architrave and plinths to receive a new bronze door frame for fireproof doors to be added behind the existing door to the space.⁴⁹³

A new marble floor was laid, and an eight-inch high platform was installed in front of the windows. A desk for the attendant was placed on the platform.

The room, at the time of writing this report is called the Cheverus Room, and is painted in ivory and shades of tan.

Fixtures and Furnishings

In 1915 the table lamps and catalogue case lamps in the Music Library were replaced with “semi-indirect fixtures.”⁴⁹⁴ As of 1921, there was a piano made by Benjamin Crehore of Milton in 1800 housed in the Music Library.⁴⁹⁵

A photograph taken after the Treasure Room conversion shows new bronze chandeliers hanging from the center vault and the end bays of the ceiling. Sconces to match these chandeliers replaced those formerly mounted on the pilasters. All of these lighting fixtures still remain at the time of the writing of this report, and the windows have louvered blinds.

7.3.3.3

Barton Library

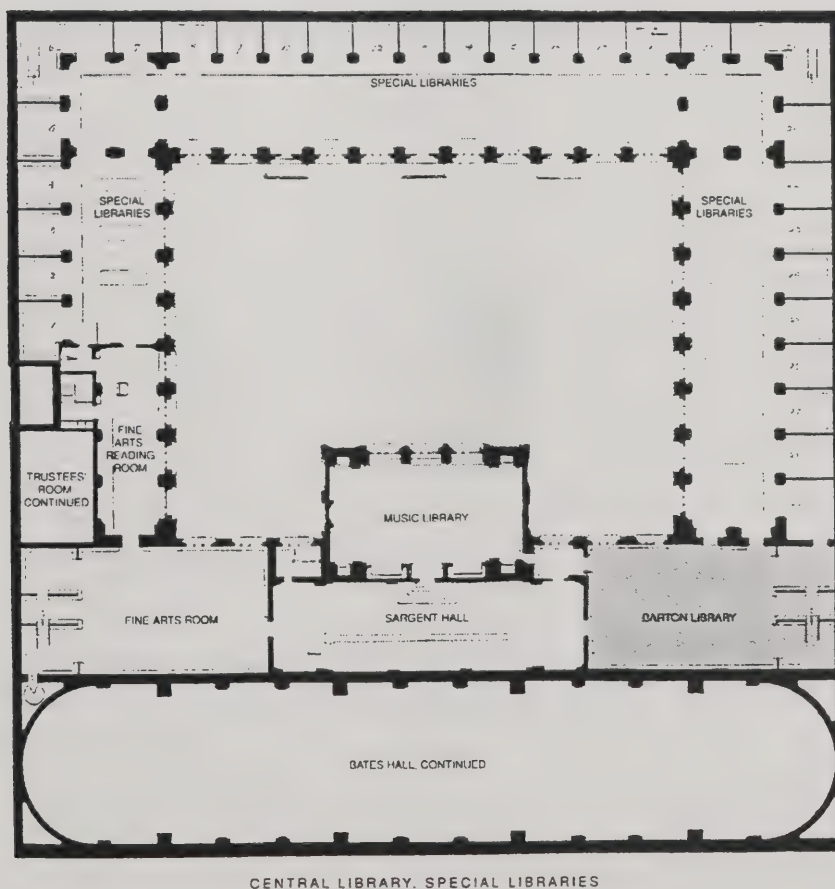
1990s Restoration Room No.
705

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Reserved Bowditch
Early MMW	Engravings & Fine Arts
Monograph	No plan
1895	Barton Library
1897	Barton Ticknor
1898	Barton Ticknor
1908	Barton Ticknor
1929	Music Room
1959	Music Department
1974	Charlotte Cushman Room

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed 1895

Purpose

The domed room at the north end of Sargent Hall was reserved to house special collections. The Barton Collection of English dramatic literature, for which the room was named, was the major collection kept in this room from the beginning. The collection contained 14,000 volumes including 1,300 editions of Shakespeare. This large Shakespeare collection, Small related, was “unequalled in the world, outside of two or three of the great English libraries.”⁴⁹⁶ In 1894, the collection was reportedly valued at \$250,000.⁴⁹⁷ The other most prominent collection was the Ticknor collection bequeathed to the library by George Ticknor, a historian of Spanish literature and former president of the Library. The collection contained between six and seven thousand volumes of Spanish books. At the opening of the Library, there were three other collections housed in this room. The Prince collection, including 3,000 volumes relating to the early history of New England, was formed by Reverend Thomas Prince, a minister of the Old South in the first half of the 18th century. The Lewis collection also contained about 600 books relating to New England and Massachusetts. Finally, the Barlow collection of Americana contained books “almost all of unusual rarity” purchased by the BPL from S. L. M. Barlow of Brooklyn, New York.⁴⁹⁸

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

The Barton Library was entered through a leather door at the north end of Sargent Hall. It was a rectangular room with an elliptical domed plaster ceiling (fig. I-74). In each corner of the flat ceiling around the dome, there was a round niche ornamented with decorative plaster leaf patterns. The ceiling may have been painted with calcimine, according to a later specification that recommends re-coating with calcimine. At the north end of the room, there was a deep alcove of stacks on both the ground floor and balcony level. The walls of both the lower level and gallery level were lined with bookcases topped by a decorative plaster cornice. The floor was of the typical terrazzo found in the rest of the building with a wide border darker than the field in the center.

On the west wall, there were two windows that let light in from the courtyard, and a leather door that led to the north corridor wing. An oculus at the top of the dome also provided light to the room.

Fixtures and Furnishings

The room contained long oak tables and Windsor chairs arranged in two rows. At the opening of the Library, there was a bronze statue of Sir Henry Vane sculpted by MacMonnies and donated to the Library by Dr. Charles Goddard Weld. Vane was the Governor of Massachusetts in from 1636 to 1937.⁴⁹⁹ This statue remained here for a few years and was later placed in a niche in the Entrance Vestibule.

Library Alterations to 1909

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

In 1905 the walls, piers, and ceiling were refinished in a campaign headed by the Library's painter.⁵⁰⁰

An undated photograph, most likely from this period, showed grated doors covering the shelves on the first level. At the time of the photograph, there was an exhibition of prints displayed on the doors, but they appear to be permanent (fig. I-75).

Fixtures and Furnishings

In 1897, lights were added inside the rim of the dome (figs. I-75, I-76).⁵⁰¹

As of 1899, there were several furniture additions to the room. These included: George Ticknor's mahogany library desk; a large, carved teak table with a marble top; and a heavy armchair made of wood from the "famous old Elm" that stood on Boston Common.⁵⁰²

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

Purpose

The room held these collections until 1929 when the Music Library was moved in from its original location off the west side of Sargent Hall. In 1974–75 this room was re-named the Charlotte Cushman Room

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

When the Music Library was moved into this room, several changes were made. For the most part, the room still looked much like it did originally, with some alteration to materials and minor details. According to a 1926 drawing, the doors on all shelving were removed, and at the time of the writing of this report they remained open shelving. In addition, the balcony floor was lowered from 11-feet 3/4-inches high to 9-feet 6-inches.⁵⁰³ A Fox & Gale drawing from November 1928 detailed a new copper cornice at the base of the dome.⁵⁰⁴ It described the removal of the existing plaster cornice and its replacement with a copper one. Some of these changes may have been prompted by fire safety reports that recommended reconstruction of the room with fireproof equipment, but no specific reference to fireproofing was found on these drawings. For instance, the wooden bookcases were replaced with metal bookcases.

A set of 1964 specifications detailed repairs to plaster, cleaning, and repainting all materials where necessary. Calcimine paint was recommended for refinishing the ceiling and oil based and enamel paint, were recommended for the walls and ceilings of the alcoves.⁵⁰⁵ It was likely that the terrazzo floor was covered with rubber tile during this time period as well.

In fiscal year 1974–75, this room was refurbished.⁵⁰⁶

Fixtures and Furnishings

The existing fluorescent desk lamps and fixtures hanging under the balcony were most likely installed in the 1960s as they were in other parts of the library.

7.3.3.4 Fine Arts Room

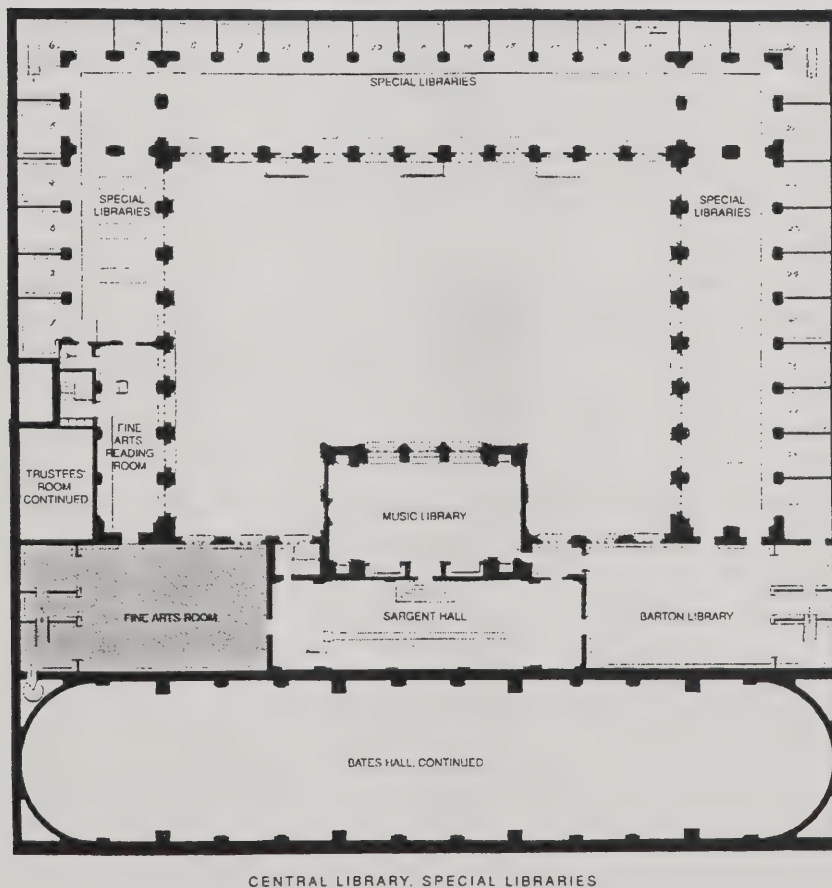
1990s Restoration Room No.
702

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	Reserved
Early MMW	Barton
Monograph	no plan
1895	Fine Arts Room
1897	Fine Arts
1898	Fine Arts
1908	Fine Arts
1916	Exhibition Room
1940	Fine Arts Exhibition Room
1941	Wiggin Print Gallery
1964	Wiggin Print Gallery

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed 1895

Purpose

The domed room at the south end of Sargent Hall was designed to house special collections. From early on, this room was designated the Fine Arts Room. At the time of the Library opening, it contained books associated with the fine arts, particularly in the fields of archaeology and architecture. In addition to books, the collection also contained illustrations.⁵⁰⁷

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

The Fine Arts Room, almost a mirror image of the Barton Ticknor Room, was entered through a leather door at the south end of Sargent Hall. It was a rectangular room with an elliptical domed plaster ceiling. In each corner of the flat ceiling around the dome, there was a round niche ornamented with decorative plaster leaf patterns. The ceiling may have been painted with calcimine (see note in Barton Library). At the north end of the room, there was an alcove with a set of stairs leading to the Print Room above. The walls of the lower level were covered with cloth so they could be used for the exhibition of illustrations and prints from the Library's collection. The gallery level walls were lined with bookcases, and topped by a decorative plaster cornice. The floor was of the typical terrazzo found in the rest of the building (figs. I-78, I-79, D-25).

On the west wall, there were two arched windows that let in light from the courtyard and a door leading to the south gallery wing (Fine Arts Reading Room). An oculus at the top of the dome also provided light to the room.

Fixtures and Furnishings

Early photos show that the room contained freestanding wooden exhibition cases. A desk and at least one small table and chairs were also in the room.

Library Alterations to 1909

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

No information has been found to indicate architectural changes during this time period.

Fixtures and Furnishings

In 1897, lights were added inside the rim of the dome.⁵⁰⁸

No noted changes in furnishings were made.

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

Purpose

The Fine Arts Room throughout the Library's history has been the location where prints were exhibited. In 1941 the name of the room was changed to the Wiggin Gallery, named for Mr. Albert H. Wiggin who gave his collection of prints and drawings to the Library. Wiggin, a New York financier born in Boston, collected works of American and European artists of the 19th and 20th centuries including Toulouse-Lautrec, Daumier, and Whistler among others.⁵⁰⁹

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

In 1925 increased appropriations made it possible to paint the ironwork and window trim in the Fine Arts Room. Photographs, dated 1927, show new wood trimmed exhibition panels lining the east wall (fig. I-80). Curtains closed off the large square openings in the south wall. The terrazzo floor was cracked and appears to have been patched in several places. In 1930, the Examining Committee noted that this floor needed renovation, and followed up in 1933 by saying that this room is "characterless and uninteresting."⁵¹⁰

When the room was changed to the Wiggin Gallery, significant changes were made. Drawings dated December 12, 1940 by Ames, Child & Graves detailed these alterations. A new terrazzo floor was laid in both the main room and stair alcove. The present bookcases were removed and new exhibition cases were built. At the south end of the

room leading into the stair alcove, two new arched openings were created with marble architraves and jambs, and enclosed with wrought iron gates.⁵¹¹

These 1940 drawings noted that the plaster cornice supporting the dome was replaced with a copper cornice, as was done in the late 1920s in the Barton Ticknor Room (705).

In the 1962 Ames, Child & Graves restoration, further changes were made to the Fine Arts Room, most of which remain today. A new balcony wall of 1/2 inch Philippine mahogany plywood was installed to replace the iron railings. New monk's cloth was installed in the exhibition cases. In the stair alcove, new vinyl asbestos tile treads were put in on the stairs. A new rubber tile floor was put in on the floor, and the Sargent sketches existing today were put into removable panels on the walls.⁵¹²

In 1965, the Diorama Room or "Little Gallery" was created in the west room of the alcove off the Fine Arts room. The room was created to house the dioramas of Louise Stimson of Concord, Massachusetts. There were eleven dioramas relating to prints held in the Wiggin Collection or related to the life of one of the printmakers. These dioramas are still located in this room today.⁵¹³ A set of drawings details the Diorama Room, which had new polyester terrazzo flooring and Formica based plywood panels around the walls.⁵¹⁴

At the time of the writing of this report, the Wiggin Gallery has a black and gray terrazzo floor with a black border. The walls are painted blue, and have exhibition boxes inset into them around the perimeter of the ground floor level. Black marble arched doorways lead to the stair alcove and Diorama room. The Gallery wall is also painted blue with a varnished wood railing. The walls of the gallery level no longer have bookcases, but are covered with cloth so that prints can be exhibited easily on them. The south wall of the gallery is no longer open to the alcove where it used to be. Doors have been put into the former openings. The ceiling is painted ivory, and the skylight in the center is painted over in a blue color blocking direct light from passing through the glass. The windows have rust colored curtains.

Fixtures and Furnishings

The 1927 photos show fluorescent fixtures hanging from the underside of the balcony. A 1953 Ames, Child & Graves drawing details new fluorescent strip valences around the perimeter of the room.⁵¹⁵ At the time of this writing, none of these fixtures is extant. The exhibition cases on the main level are lit from the inside, and lighting is installed behind the cornice, flush with the wall at the balcony level.

At the time of this writing, there are metal free-standing exhibition cases in the Wiggin Room, which most likely replaced the original wooden cases due to fireproofing concerns.

7.3.3.5 Photographing Room, Special Library Floor Gallery

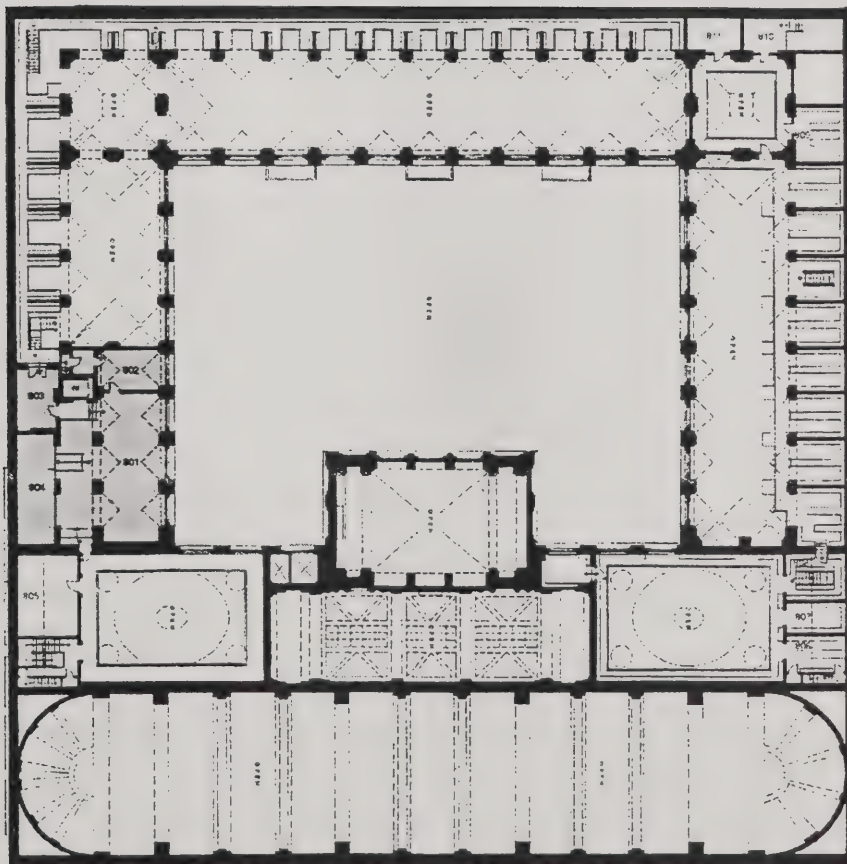
1990s Restoration Room Number
801–804

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	No plan
Monograph	No plan
1895	Photographing Room
1946	Office of Curator of Prints
1972	Print Department

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed 1895

Purpose

At the opening of the Library, the balcony area off the Fine Arts Room gallery was reserved for the use of photographing prints and manuscript plates from the Fine Arts collection. Well lit by natural light and located near the Fine Arts Department, this was an appropriately designated space. Because it was a secondary space, very little information has been found regarding its history.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

The Photographing Room was the only self-contained room on this level. It was reached by ascending the steps at the south end of the Fine Arts Room and turning east on the gallery level. It received natural light from three large arched courtyard windows on its north wall. In front of the windows ran a decorative metal railing which is still extant today. The ceiling was vaulted and supported by piers that divided the space into two areas (fig. D-26).⁵¹⁶

Fixtures and Furnishings

There is built-in shelving that was most likely installed originally in the room.

No photos or records of the original lighting or free-standing furnishings were found.

Library Alterations to 1909

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

No information has been found to indicate architectural changes in this time period.

Fixtures and Furnishings

No noted changes in fixtures or furnishings were made.

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

Purpose

Post-1945 references to the space call it the “Office of the Curator of Prints.” It was presumably transformed after the 1941 donation of the Wiggin Collection of prints, for which additional administration must have been needed. By 1964, the balcony was simply labeled Print Department. By this time, the Wiggin Room was used primarily as an exhibition space, leaving most of the storage to be done on the balcony level.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

Changes were detailed in two sets of drawings, one from 1940 and one from 1948. Today, the room looks much as the original McKim, Mead & White drawings detailed it, indicating that no major changes were made at this time. The replacement of the terrazzo floor with a rubber tile floor is probably the most significant change recorded on the drawings.⁵¹⁷

At the time of writing this report, the walls are painted light green and the ceiling is painted ivory.

Fixtures and Furnishings

Today, two types of hanging fixtures exist in the Print Department. Their installation date is not known.

The room contains tables and desks used for the Print Department staff and for Library patrons who wish to view prints in the collection.

7.3.3.6 Special Library Floor Corridors

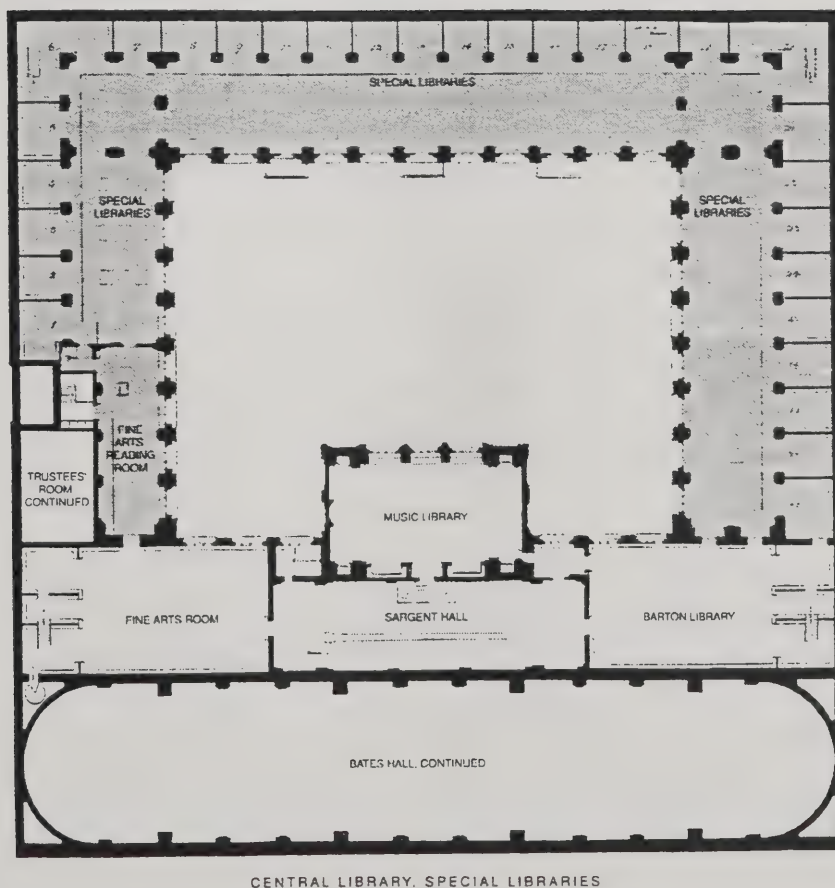
1990s Restoration Room No.
706–718

Use/Name Changes of Room

Heliotype	No plan
Monograph	No plan
1895	Special Libraries
1897	Students Room
1898–1959	Special Libraries

Plan as built in 1895

N→



Library as Completed 1895

Purpose

The corridors of the Special Library Floor were reserved for housing of special collections in the alcoves, and for reading in the spans between the alcoves and the large windows facing the courtyard. One critic wrote that “Students will find large accommodations here for the quiet pursuit of particular lines of investigation. It is intended to provide opportunities for particular research in other directions as well.”⁵¹⁸ At the time of the Library opening, the North Corridor was said to house the following collections: John Adams Collection of 2,800 volumes; Bowditch Collection of mathematical and astronomical books; Thayer Collection of extra-illustrated manuscripts; Benjamin Franklin Collection of editions of his writings and publications about his life; and the Parker Collection of anti-slavery literature. Continuing around to the west corridor were a Collection of British documents, the American History Collection, and at the south end, a collection of United States Documents. The South Corridor contained the Fine Arts Collection and Fine Arts Reading Room.⁵¹⁹ Other collections that appeared in these corridors throughout the years included: The 20th Massachusetts Volunteer Memorial Library of books related to the Civil War and other U.S. wars; the Galatea Collection of books related to the history of women; the Library of the Boston Browning Society containing books related to Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning; the Codman Collection of books on landscape gardening and architecture; and the Artz Collection in commemoration of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.⁵²⁰

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

The corridors of the Special Library Floor ran around the north, west, and south sides of the building spanning its entire width from the outside wall to the courtyard wall. A description of the corridors written before the Library opened simply described the spaces.

...an open grating runs down the middle of each of the four long rooms which surround the court; between the grating and the street will be stored various special collections of books; between the grating and the court is ample space for readers, lighted by numerous broad and lofty windows; no better study-room could be desired.⁵²¹

The corridors were lined on the courtyard side with rows of large arched windows with radiators covered by grilles beneath. The plaster ceilings were vaulted, supported by square piers in the center of the space and engaged piers between the windows. The floors were originally of terrazzo (fig. I-84). Opposite the window wall, on the other side

of the piers, there were galleried alcoves containing the stacks. In the south and west corridors, the gallery floor undulated in a “U” shape in each alcove (fig. I-88), but in the north corridor, the gallery floor covered the entire first level alcove area. In each case, a metal railing ran around the gallery floor. The book railway and pneumatic tubes ran through the galleries of the alcoves. The book elevator that carried the books to the stacks below was located near the Fine Arts Room.

The finishes in these corridors were simple at the opening of the Library, although it seems that this was not intended to be the ultimate appearance. Walker predicted that the ceiling “in future times can be made famous by its decorations as is the loggia of Raphael, and will recall similar galleries in Italian palaces.”⁵²² The area that came to be known as the Fine Arts Reading Room, was intended at one point to be an Architectural Library (718). The space was supposed to be decorated by architects, in memory of H. H. Richardson.⁵²³ However, none of this decoration was ever carried out (fig. I-82).

Fixtures and Furnishings

Early photographs of the corridor reading rooms show that they contained the typical long oak tables and Windsor chairs arranged in rows. The west gallery had flat map files at each pier.

There were double globed sconces on each of the pilasters and piers running the length of the corridors. The tables had the typical double-armed desk lamps.

Library Alterations to 1909

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

No significant architectural changes were made to the corridors in this time period. In 1896, there was 2,150 feet of radiating surface added on the floor improving the conditions for readers.⁵²⁴ In addition, in 1907 the vacuum cleaning system was extended to include the Special Library Floor.⁵²⁵

Fixtures and Furnishings

No evidence of changes in fixtures or furnishings during this period was found.

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

Purpose

These corridors always held special collections, but they were moved around in this time period when other changes were made throughout the floor. Until 1921 the Fine Arts Department was housed in the south corridor. The 1921 Handbook related that it had been moved to the West Corridor (where it is today). The old Fine Arts Reading Room area in the south corridor later became the Science and Technology Department.⁵²⁶ In 1929, the Music Department was moved into part of the North Gallery adjoining the old Barton Ticknor Room.⁵²⁷ In 1940 plans, this area in the North Gallery was designated as the Rare Book Department.⁵²⁸ In 1966, the Science and Technology reference collection was moved from the south corridor to the Patent Room in the west wing. After its move, the alcove area of the south corridor was closed off and used for storage. The partition wall closing off the storage area was used as additional exhibition space.

The current configuration seems to have been arranged between 1973 and 1975 after the opening of the Johnson Building. The West Gallery housed the Fine Arts and Music Departments. The Rare Books department was moved into the Johnson Building with a new entrance at the north end of the West Gallery. This corner of the floor was renovated into the Serge Koussevitzky Exhibition Area.

Physical Description

Architectural Details and Finishes

These changes in collection locations necessitated physical alterations in some cases. In 1927, \$250,000 was appropriated for improvements on the third floor. A full set of drawings prepared by Fox & Gale architects at that time details the changes made. The North Gallery received the most significant alterations. Bronze gates were installed at the entrance to each alcove so that collections could be locked up (fig. I-87). In the center of the long hall, a glazed wood screen was installed to bisect the length of the space. The end closest to the old Barton Ticknor Room was still a reading room, while the west end contained many desks and was seemingly an administrative area. The terrazzo floor was covered with rubber tile at this time as well.⁵²⁹ There is evidence today of further alterations made in the North Gallery in 1934. Partitions were erected in the west end of the gallery to make a small office. Now, only scars remain in the floor tiles from where the partitions were removed.⁵³⁰

In 1964 there were some additional changes made to all corridors. Specifications for a contract with ABC Electrical Corp. indicate that a new rubber tile floor and base were to

be installed atop the terrazzo floor in the south and west corridors. They were instructed to provide “latex type underlayment for leveling the floor and to repair any defects that might interfere with the proper laying of the floor.”⁵³¹ The rubber tile was specified as “1/8” x 9” x 9” homogeneous Rubber Tile in the Marble Series as made by Armstrong or equal.” In the North Corridor, repairs were made to the plaster, and all materials were refinished as necessary.⁵³²

Fixtures and Furnishings

In 1923, fifteen 300-watt indirect ceiling fixtures were installed in the west corridor (fig. I-85). The 1928 Annual Report notes more new lights in this corridor that year.⁵³³ Fluorescent light fixtures detailed on the 1931 drawings of the West and South Galleries still exist today.⁵³⁴ Photos dated 1929, show hanging fixtures in the North Gallery which are still extant today (fig. I-86). The exact installation date of these fixtures has not been found.

In 1964, new box lights and hanging globes were installed in the alcoves.⁵³⁵

7.3.4 Stacks

Library as Completed 1895

The design of the interior of the Boston Public Library was innovative in many ways. One of the most original elements of the building's design was the placement and construction of the stacks. McKim's heliotype drawings of 1888 locate the stacks in a U-shape on three sides of the building—filling half of the north wing, the full west wing, and half of the south wing on each floor. This design was to hold two million volumes, a number that Jordy points out was equal to the capacity for the new Library of Congress building. As the design matured, however, the stacks were limited only to the southwest corner of the six floors, approximately half of the area of McKim's original design. The stacks were ventilated and lighted by windows on both the court side and the exterior shell of the building.

The new elements of the stack design were twofold. First, their placement in a centralized block as closed stacks was only just being developed in America, and meant that there would be a new system for patrons to obtain books from the collection. Second, the construction of each level as an independent unit was a convention that was slowly taking root in library architecture, and enabled the eventual reorganization of these spaces for different uses.

In the old BPL building on Boylston Street and in most libraries around the world at the end of the nineteenth century, the stacks surrounded the patrons in one large reading room or in various specialized reading rooms. In the new design, the placement of most of the collection in a location inaccessible to the public, meant that patrons could no longer browse the shelves as they were used to doing. Although centralized stacks were beginning to appear in American libraries in the 1880s, they had not achieved unanimous acceptance by the library community. William Frederick Poole, the compiler of *Poole's Index to Periodical Literature* and the librarian of the Newberry Library in Chicago, still advocated the design of a series of individual reading rooms with open shelving. He publicly criticized the design of the Boston Public Library stacks in an interview published in the *Library Journal*.⁵³⁶ Jordy cites Professor John J. Boll, a historian of nineteenth-century library buildings, as reporting that the Bibliotheque Sainte-Genevieve was one of the first libraries to have some semblance of the modern stack in its design, so it is apparent that McKim again used this building as a source for his design.⁵³⁷ It also seems clear that the program for the building required this type of organization. According to Jordy, the Trustees specified that the building contain a centralized stack. The *Newton Circuit* describes this element of the building design as a primary goal of the program:

The main idea [of the design] has been to produce a building in which the book stacks shall be removed from the main hall or delivery room, without hindrance to the promptness and efficiency of deliveries. This is a decided departure from the original notion of a central hall surrounded by stacks. This is the first time that the idea has ever been carried out, and if the arrangement embodied in the new building proves entirely satisfactory it will undoubtedly exert a great influence on library construction, as the progress of this work is watched with interest by architects the world over.⁵³⁸

This design element was noted in the contemporary literature as an innovation and also somewhat of a loss in traditional library atmosphere to which the public was accustomed. In *Century Magazine* Lindsay Swift wrote that the books “no longer form an important adjunct to the architectural features, or continue to give an esthetic aid to the minds of readers long used to the silent dignity of their presence.”⁵³⁹ In fact, the situation was not as drastic as he makes it sound. Bates Hall did contain reference books in the shelves around the perimeter of the room, and the Special Libraries would also retain their collections within their designated reading rooms.

The pneumatic tube system and book railway used to request and receive books was the innovative mechanism incorporated by McKim to facilitate smooth delivery of books. The use of this system involved sending paper requests through a pneumatic tube system to the designated stack where the book was located. The slip was received by an attendant who would find the book, send it on the book railway system to the centrally located book elevator, which would transport the book up or down to the Delivery Alcove behind the Delivery Room. Another attendant stationed in the delivery alcove would retrieve the book and deliver it to the patron. These mechanisms are discussed in more detail in “Delivery Room,” Section 7.3.2.3 of this report.

The second innovation of the stacks was their construction. While they were not built as true stacks, a shelving system supported on a self-sustaining frame, the stack levels at the BPL were constructed each as an independent structural unit. Jordy explains that “McKim placed wooden cases on floors supported by steel beams and tile arches, and brought to a level surface by a thick layer of concrete.”⁵⁴⁰ This design feature became important as early as 1898 when the interior design of the library began to be altered to accommodate its changing needs. As the years went on and the needs of the library changed and grew, stack space was needed for offices and other library uses as well as for book storage. Because each floor was its own independent unit, walls could be moved around and book partitions could be moved as needed to create spaces of varying size not anticipated in the original design.

Library Alterations to 1909

Changes to the stack areas occurred almost immediately after the Library opening. By 1898, parts of Stacks 1, 2 and 5 were equipped for administrative uses, and in Stack 2 an office was created for the Branch Library Distribution department. For example, the Librarian's office was moved from its original location behind the Delivery Room to Stack Level 5 even farther back (see *Interior Plan Evolution, Bates Hall Floor*). These changes inevitably meant the loss of book storage space for the creation of office space. The adaptation of the stacks for other uses also prompted the enlargement of some windows on the Blagden Street elevation to over double their original width.⁵⁴¹

Maintenance also became an issue in the stack area. In 1905 a vacuum cleaning system was installed in the stacks, and it was extended in 1907 for cleaning of the books and shelves.⁵⁴²

Library Alterations 1910 to 1972

Fireproofing was another concern in the late 1920s, which prompted the Examining Committee to recommend the substitution of steel shelving for wooden shelving throughout the library. The shelves were subsequently changed as per this suggestion.

The most major changes occurred after 1942 when the completion of the New England Book Depository enabled the removal of over 100,000 seldom used books from the stacks in the library to this storage facility off site. This relocation of the books allowed for the stack areas to be reused for administrative functions, such as the Cataloguing, Receiving and Ordering Departments, previously housed in publicly accessible spaces within the building. For years, the Examining Committee had urged the Library to move these administrative functions out of their prominent, easily accessible locations off the Entrance Hall to make room for collections, such as the Children's Department, that they believed should be more easily accessible to the public.

In a series of changes orchestrated by Ames, Child & Graves Architects from the mid-1940s to mid-1960s, many alterations were made to the stack areas, further lessening the space for book storage. These additions included areas for (1) Personnel Administration: Personnel Office, In-Service Training Course classrooms, a Staff Library, Staff Hospital, Coffee Shop, and locker and toilet rooms for staff; (2) Book Selection, Cataloguing, and Classification Departments for Home Reading & Reference and Research Services (original Catalogue and Receiving & Ordering Departments), Book purchasing and preparation, and Book stock for Branch Libraries; (3) Administrative offices; (4) Chief Librarians of Division of Reference & Research Services and Division of Home Reading &

Community Services; and (5) Business Offices.⁵⁴³ These changes are detailed on a series of Ames, Child & Graves drawings from 1946 to 1965.⁵⁴⁴

Currently the stacks are still used for a variety of uses, including book storage of the library's Research Collection. The Johnson Building now houses open stacks for the Library's circulating collection, but in the McKim building, books are still requested by the patrons on small slips of paper and retrieved by attendants.

8.0 1990s Project: McKim Building

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 Background
- 8.1.2 Restoration Planning
- 8.1.3 Construction Phases

8.2 Exterior

- 8.2.1 Dartmouth Street Facade
- 8.2.2 Blagden Street Facade
- 8.2.3 Boylston Street Facade
- 8.2.4 Interior Court

8.3 Interior

- 8.3.1 Basement Floor
- 8.3.2 Ground Floor
- 8.3.3 Stack One
- 8.3.4 Bates Hall Floor
- 8.3.5 Special Library Floor

8.0 1990s Project: McKim Building

8.1 INTRODUCTION

8.1.1 Background

During the eighty years that the McKim Building functioned as the main public library of the city of Boston, it had been modified to try to accommodate the library's expanding departmental and programmatic space requirements and provide the stack space required to house the ever expanding collection. These alterations had changed the appearance and function of many of McKim's interior spaces.

With the opening of the Johnson Building in 1972, the overcrowding in the McKim Building was greatly relieved.⁵⁴⁵ The general (lending) library was moved to the Johnson Building and new stack space enabled fragmented and crowded research collections to be assembled in more accessible spaces in the McKim Building.⁵⁴⁶ In the short term, the freeing of space in the McKim Building also enabled the Library to undertake general maintenance renovations while they began long-term planning for the restoration of the McKim Building.

Between 1973 and 1975, the McKim building underwent improvements including new lighting and repainting. The Rare Books and Manuscripts Department was equipped with an independent air conditioning unit and the area formerly used as the staff lounge, located between the courtyard and the Johnson Building, was painted and prepared to be opened as the new publication and sales area. The Public Facilities Department oversaw the cleaning and repainting of the exterior iron and metal work, the painting of various interior rooms, repairing furniture, and re-plastering of many large areas of deteriorated plaster in the stacks and corridors of the McKim Building.⁵⁴⁷

Beginning in 1979, with much of the reorganization of the Research Library Department completed, the emphasis shifted to achieving energy efficiency in heat and electricity usage. Plans were begun to upgrade the heating system, but no changes made. The fiscal year 1979–1980 represented a year of continued stringent efforts in energy conservation with substantial reductions in energy usage in the Central Library.⁵⁴⁸

The Stull Report also states that the exterior of the building underwent extensive restoration from 1978 to 1980, though it gives no details about this work.⁵⁴⁹

In 1981, the Subcommittee on Buildings began to focus on the condition and maintenance of the McKim and Johnson Buildings. It was agreed that, although the

McKim building was a fine facility, it would eventually need to be altered to serve the City and region's needs.⁵⁵⁰ In 1981, a team of consultants, directed by Stull Associates, Inc. was commissioned to research and document the original building configuration, the changes over the years, the present conditions, and to create a restoration program. This project was funded with the assistance of a matching grant from the National Park Service, through the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The restoration survey concentrated on all rooms judged to be of some historical interest including all public spaces, the Trustees' Rooms and a number of the staff offices of architectural merit. The final report from these efforts included an inventory and recommended restoration program or plan for the public spaces, the artwork, space use, mechanical, electrical and structural systems, as well as cost estimates and construction sequencing.

The Subcommittee on Buildings, upon reviewing the completed Stull Report, felt that there might not be the needed funds to fulfill all the requested or recommended renovations. The Committee, therefore, set forth an order of priorities. First and foremost was the replacement of the mechanical and HVAC systems that were determined to be out of date and a hazard. Secondly, the building would need to be renovated to comply with current safety requirement codes. Thirdly, the exterior of the building would need to be made weather-proof and tight. Lastly, an improved natural connection and accessibility between the McKim and Johnson buildings left much to be desired and would require further study and implementation to increase the visibility and the interest in the McKim building and its collections. It was suggested that since city funds might not be adequate to cover the entire cost of the renovation program, perhaps the outstanding art and architectural elements requiring work would be attractive and appropriate for private funding. Discussions of the Trustees also touched on the need to consult expert professional conservators with regard to any work undertaken on the murals or other ornamentation.⁵⁵¹

The Report of the Examining Committee for the Fiscal Year 1983–84 concurred that all the departments in the McKim building were dealing with antiquated HVAC systems and that the building posed “a major threat to its collections.” It was noted that water was dripping onto bookshelves as well as inside walls and windows. Inadequate lighting was noted as being a constant problem throughout the building, particularly in the third floor Sargent Gallery (703), Print Department (801–804), and Humanities Reference Department (705). Restrooms were targeted as needing substantial work since they were in deplorable condition. The Committee stated that although \$12,500,000 had been made available by a loan from the City, it was felt that this amount would be insufficient to cover the expenses outlined in Stull's extensive report written three years earlier. It was urged that every effort be made by the appropriate library and City officials to get the restoration program immediately underway since with each day that passed without

restoration work, the less could be accomplished for the public monies being expended.⁵⁵²

8.1.2 Restoration Planning

In 1984, through a designer selection process, the Library retained Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott (SBRA), along with a team of consultants, to begin the program and design development process for the restoration of McKim building. The objectives continued to be those set forth in the Stull Associates, Inc. Report of 1981:

1. Conserve the building itself and the integral works of art.
2. Reorganize the uses of various rooms to reopen prominent rooms to the public, improve the delivery system, and accommodate changes in department.
3. Replace decayed heating, electric, and plumbing systems to prevent damage to the building and the art and to provide climate control.⁵⁵³

The programming phase lasted approximately two years. It involved working with each department to analyze their programmatic needs and space requirements. During this time, it was recognized that even since 1981, the Library's program had changed, as had the budget. In order to accommodate these changes, various options for design phasing were explored. The primary objective was to maintain continuous library operation during all phases. At the same time it had to be assured that Library could afford to meet the high restoration standards that defined an "academic" restoration by maintaining quality in materials, workmanship, and details. After evaluating five different phase options, A through E, phasing option E was chosen based on its efficiency of coordination.

Timing and phasing was not the only consideration to be made in planning the restoration. Because the McKim portion of the Boston Public Library is a National Historic Landmark, utmost care had to be taken to fulfill accepted standards of restoration of a landmark of this nature. (Section 9.0 of this report contains a specific explanation of the code compliance necessary.) Appropriateness of repairs and changes to historic spaces was considered carefully, and the following Preservation Zones were defined by Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott. Each Zone represents a level of architectural significance. Spaces in the building were assigned to a Zone based on their historic and architectural significance. The extent and manner of restoration was then determined by the Zone in which the space was placed. Plans illustrating the location of these zones follow this description.

Zone 1: Areas to be Restored
Most Architecturally Significant Features and Spaces

Areas designated as Zone 1 are the most architecturally significant spaces and features of the Boston Public Library building. They contain the best preserved building fabric, are most representative of McKim's design for the building, and are most frequently viewed by the public.

All work carried out in these spaces should preserve or restore their historic appearance. Prior to initiating restoration work, thorough historical research and materials analysis should be undertaken to guide restoration decisions. Alteration, removal, or replacement of significant architectural features should not be permitted. New mechanical systems should be integrated so that they do not detract from the appearance of the original building fabric.

Zone 1 includes:

- Exterior walls and roof
- Interior court
- Entry Hall (210)
- Grand Staircase Hall (207)
- Second Floor Corridor with Puvis de Chavannes Paintings (403)
- Bates Hall (405)
- Delivery Room/Abbey Room (401)
- Elliot Room (407)
- Trustees' Room (610)
- Sargent Gallery (703)

Zone 2: Areas to be Preserved
Secondary Contributors to the Architectural Significance of the Building

Areas designated as Zone 2 are also significant architectural spaces; however, these spaces are smaller in size and simpler in detail and finish. As in Zone 1, these spaces should be restored and preserved. Where new elements are required, or the restoration of original materials is not possible, new materials and elements should match the original in scale and appearance.

Zone 2 includes:

- Newspaper Room (218)
- Government Documents (214–216)
- Microtext (202)
- Catalogue Room (406)
- Science Reference (410)
- Cheverus Room (704)
- Cushman Theater (705)
- Wiggin Gallery (702)

**Zone 3: Areas to be Rehabilitated
Minor Contributors to the Architectural Significance of the Building**

Areas designated as Zone 3 are less significant architectural spaces. They contain fewer architectural details and are not the building's principal public spaces. In rehabilitating these spaces, significant McKim details should be preserved and new finishes and uses integrated that do not compromise their original design.

Zone 3 includes:

- Trustees' Conference Room (611)
- Special Libraries (706–718)
- Print Department (801–804)

Zone 4: Areas Available for Redesign

Areas designated as Zone 4 contain few, if any, significant architectural elements, either because they were originally unfinished spaces or because they have been so altered that their architectural significance has been destroyed. New materials need not match any existing materials found in these spaces, however, they must be compatible with the historic building materials found in the other more architecturally significant spaces.

Zone 4 includes:

- Basement
- Stacks
- Administrative Offices
- Service Areas

8.1.3 Construction Phases

As originally conceived, the restoration of the McKim Building was to be divided into three phases. Phase I, which began in 1991, was to upgrade the mechanical systems, modernize the elevator systems, remodel the basement for public use, and restore the Grand Staircase Hall and Entry Hall.⁵⁵⁴ It also included asbestos abatement, which was performed by Hygeia, Inc.⁵⁵⁵ This phase of work, which concentrated on the building's systems, was intended to lay the ground work for the future restoration of the building and provide a glimpse of the dramatic visual impact of restoring the historic McKim spaces—Grand Staircase Hall and Entry Hall. Phase I work also included the creation of a “Tea Room” and “Bookstore” on the Boylston Street side of the ground floor. Although constructed during Phase I, the “Tea Room” and “Bookstore” rooms continue to be used for library space, while other spaces are renovated.

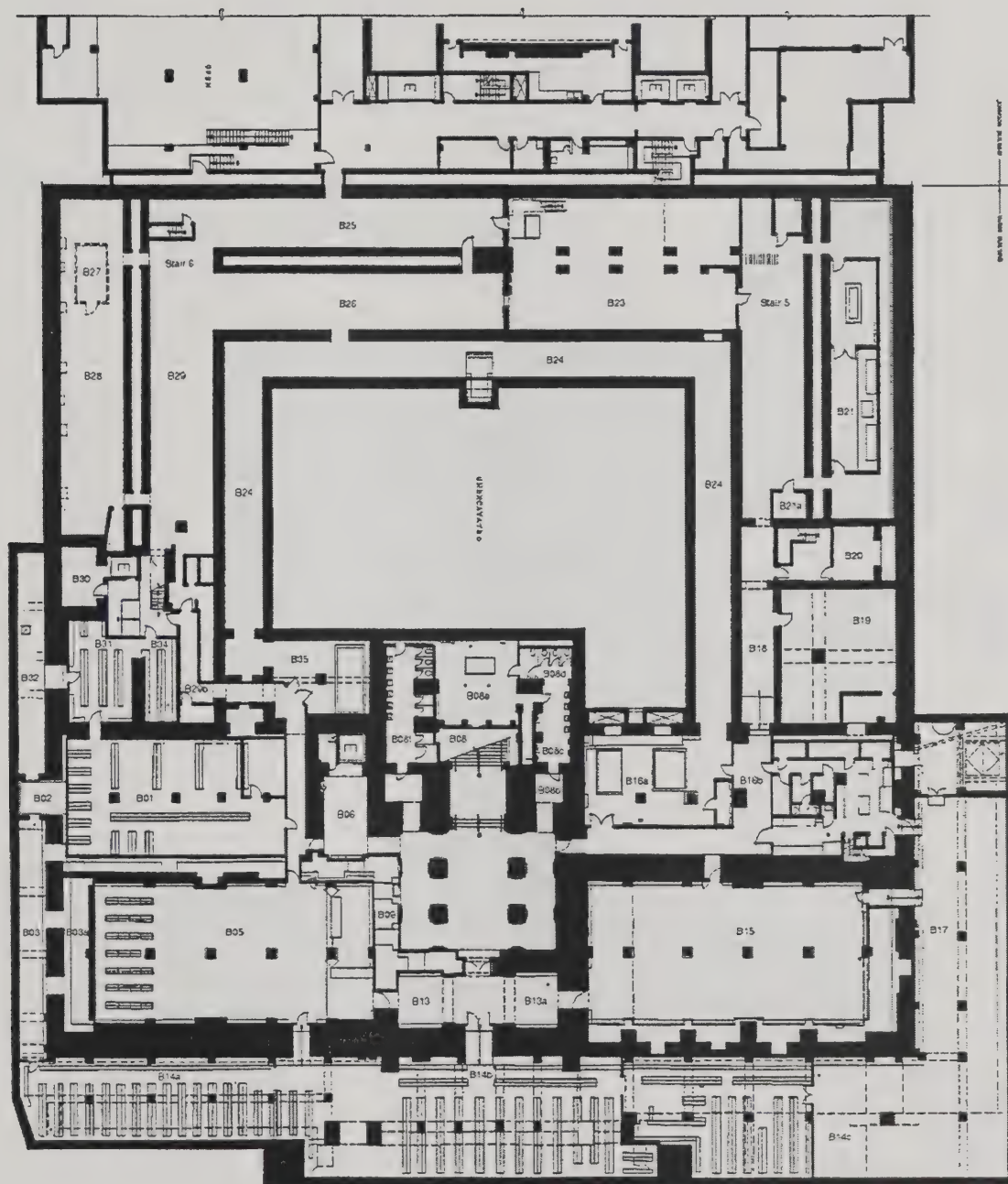
The major spatial use changes implemented during Phase I was the remodeling of the basement for public use. Access to the basement is provided by a new stair located under the Grand Stair. (This space formerly housed the McKim Building's Mechanical Room and could be entered from a door in the interior court. With the renovation, this door became a window that looks out into the interior court.) The basement spaces were remodeled with a center hall, with public lavatories and library research collections—Government Documents and Science Reference Departments—symmetrically placed on its north and south sides.

Phase II work began in October of 1996 and was scheduled to be complete by the spring of 1998. Its original scope included the following: restoration of the public rooms on the Bates Hall floor (except the Abbey Room), the renovation of the stacks and office spaces, and the remodeling of the northwest rooms on the ground and Bates Hall levels to create new passages between the McKim and Johnson Buildings. The repair of the arcade and main roofs and the wood window sash were also originally included as Phase II work, though the main roof and most of the window repair were eliminated due to cost overruns. The work in the original Phase II contract is nearing completion as this Historic Structure Report is being completed (summer of 1998). Bates Hall was completed on a fast-track and reopened in September of 1997.

Rather than moving onto Phase III of the project, additional phases of Phase II have been created. Phase IIA, which is currently in progress, includes the repair of additional windows. Phase IIB will include the restoration of the courtyard and the repair of the main roof. This work is currently scheduled for the summer of 1999. Phase IIC will include the remaining interior and exterior restoration work (including the Ground floor-south, Abbey Room, and Special Library Floor). A request for proposals for the architectural services to perform this work is presently being reviewed.

Basement

N →



Zone 1



Zone 2



Zone 3

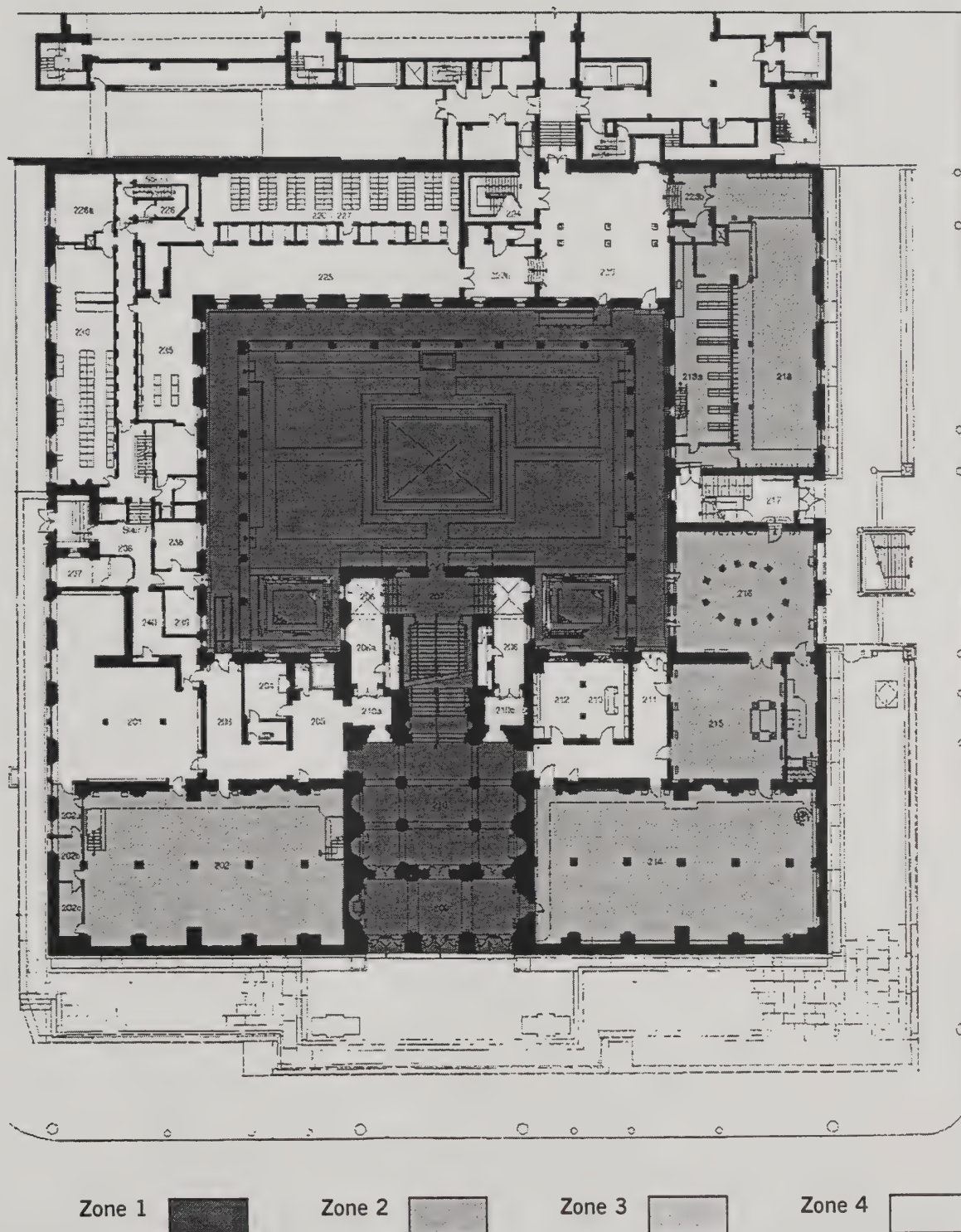


Zone 4

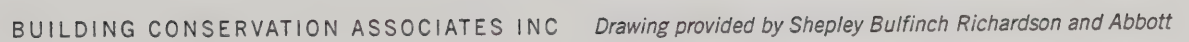


Ground Floor

N →

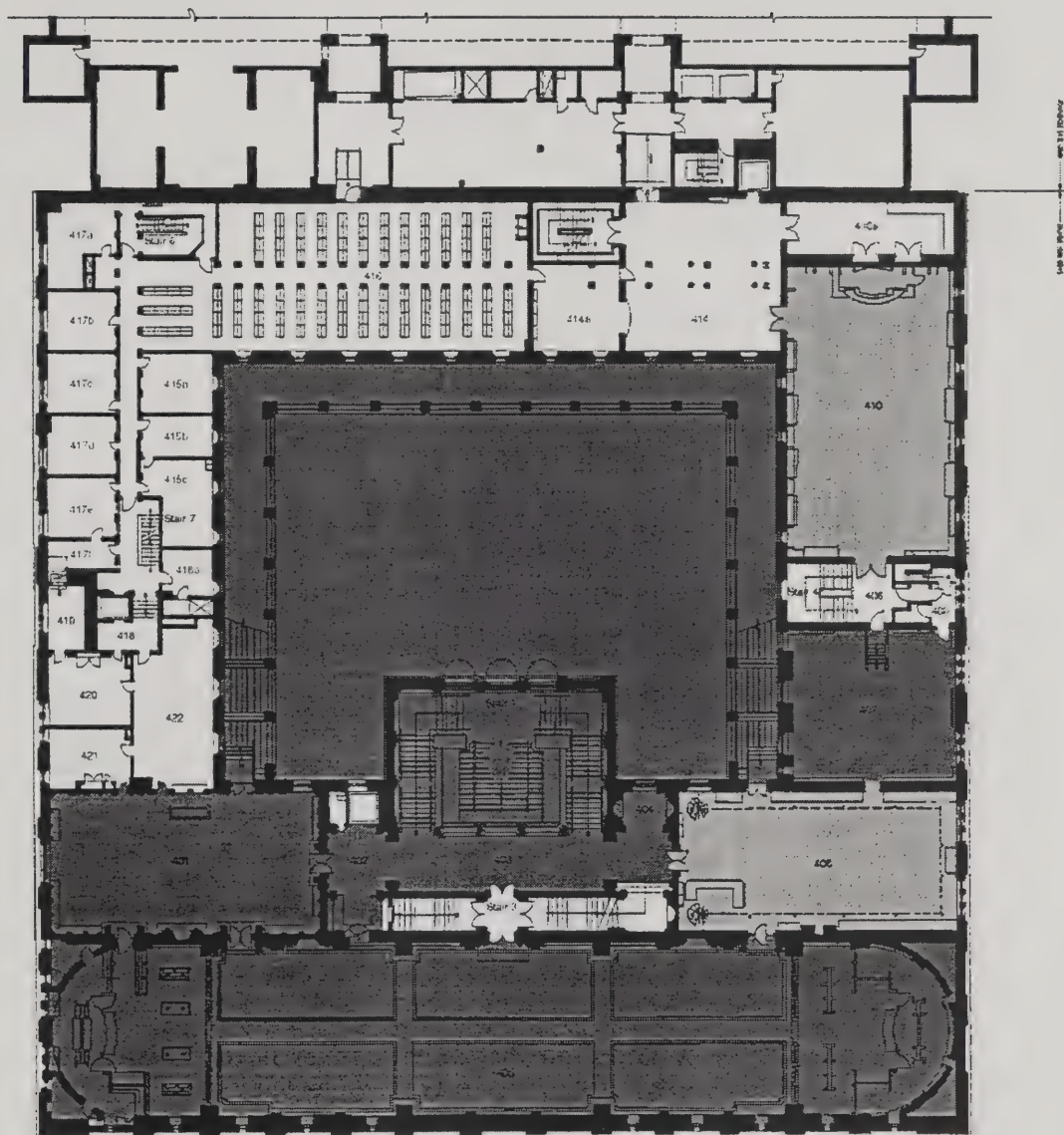


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Bates Hall Floor

N →



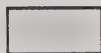
Zone 1



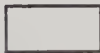
Zone 2



Zone 3

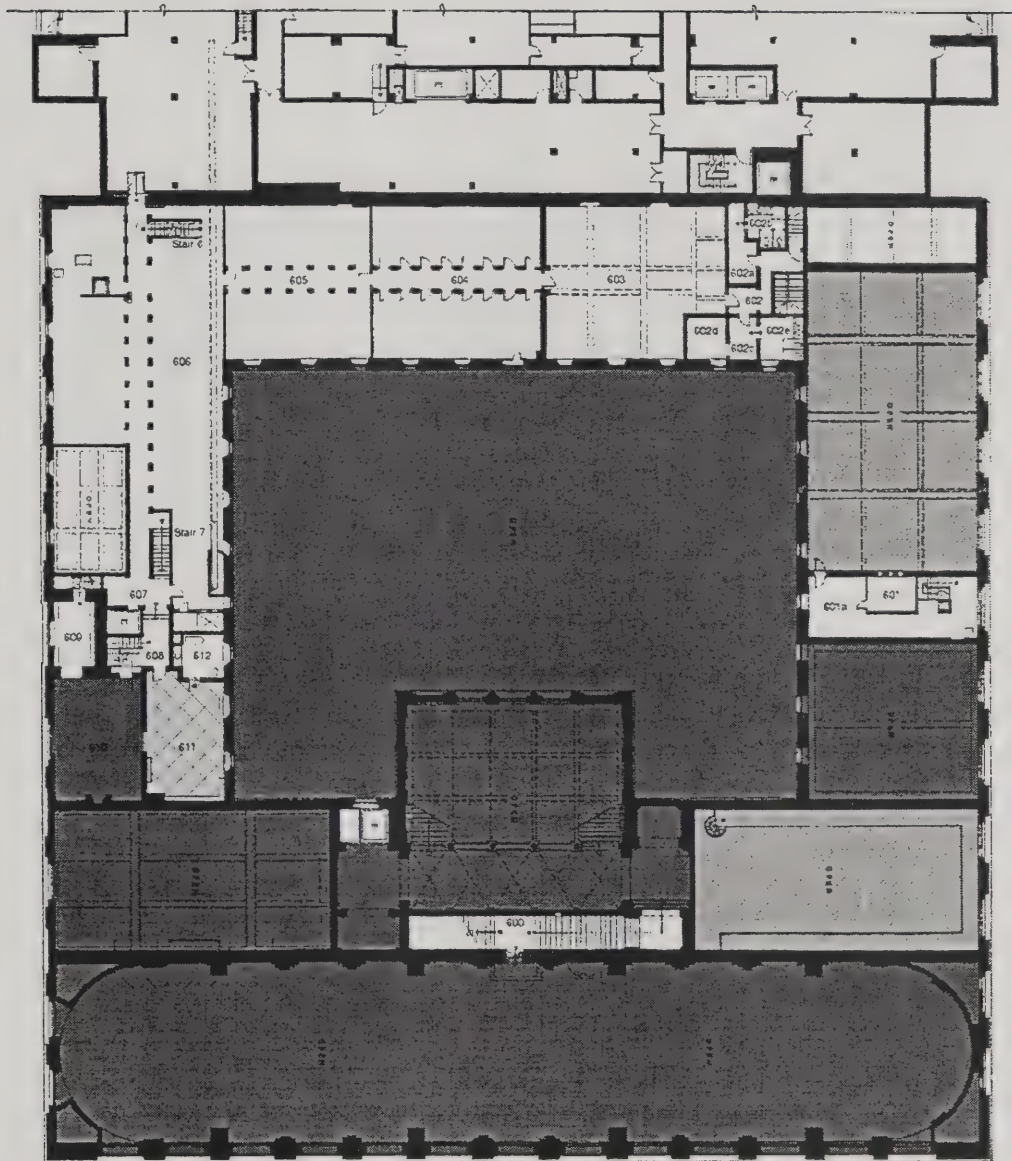


Zone 4



Entresol B

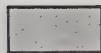
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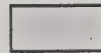
Zone 1



Zone 2



Zone 3

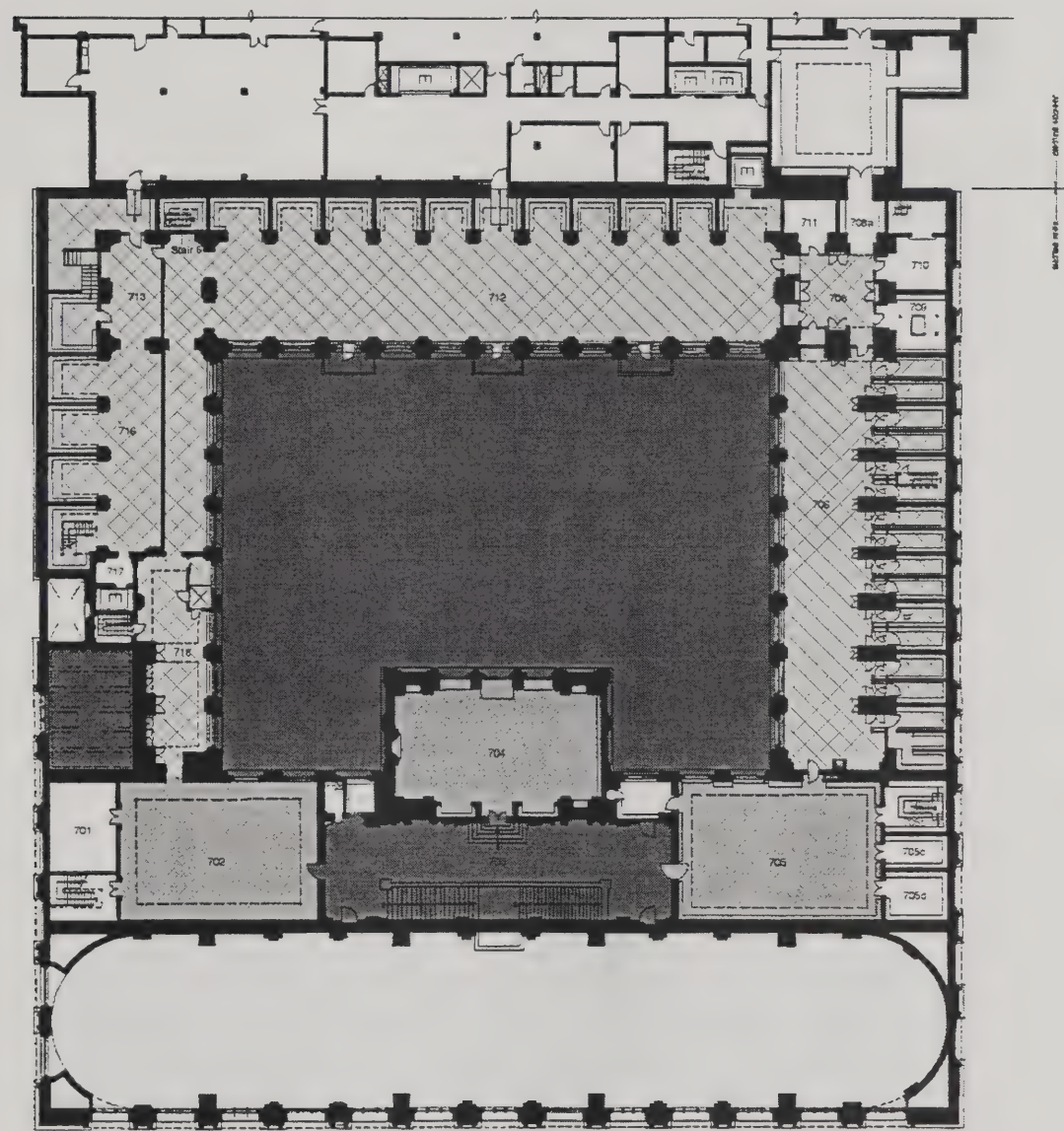





Zone 4



Special Library Floor

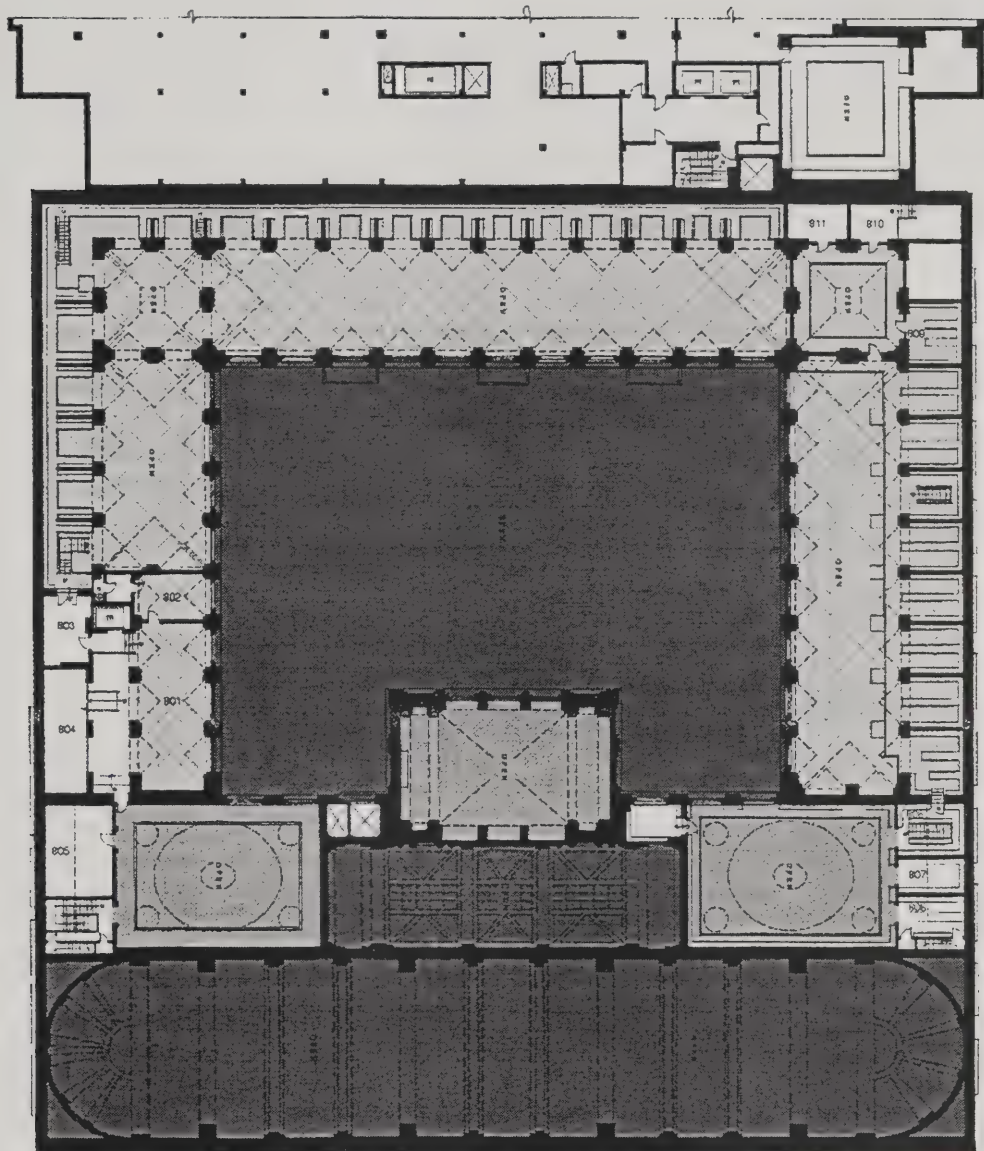
N →



Zone 1  Zone 2  Zone 3  Zone 4 

Special Library Mezzanine

N →



Zone 1

Zone 2

Zone 3

Zone 4

8.2 EXTERIOR OF THE BUILDING

The majority of the work involved in the various periods of restoration have focused on the interior spaces and their finishes. However, as interior conditions have been assessed, those affected by the deterioration of the exterior material have required the coordination with restoration and repair of necessary exterior elements, such as the roof, windows and masonry. In most situations, the work executed on the exterior facades and roof has been simple maintenance and repair or in kind replacement.

8.2.1 Dartmouth Façade

In 1995, the platform along the Dartmouth Street façade was substantially repaired with the installation of a new waterproofing system.

During Phase II, in coordination with the restoration of Bates Hall, the existing copper rosettes at the intersections of muntins on the large arched windows were removed, restored, reinstalled and repainted, and the existing wood windows were modified, restored and re-glazed with insulated glass.

8.2.2 Blagden Façade

During the restoration work of Phase II, the existing marble panels in the large arched window openings were all replaced with new marble infill panels. In addition, the existing copper grilles were removed, restored and reinstalled at all locations. These grilles were also repainted to match the restored windows. The rosettes at all windows were restored as they were on the main Dartmouth façade. Some existing windows were also restored.

8.2.3 Boylston Façade

Phase II work on this façade called for the initial investigations of the arched windows. The existing marble and grout layer were removed to expose the masonry substrate, fastening, edge, sill, window and other areas that could have conditions that affect the installation of new elements. New marble infill panels that were installed matched the existing at all marble panel locations. In addition, the existing copper grilles were removed, restored, repainted and reinstalled to match all the windows. Some existing windows were also restored.

8.2.4 Interior Court

In addition to the major reorganization and relocation of the Research Library Department shortly after the opening of the Johnson Building, attention was turned towards the replanting plans for the central courtyard. Members of the Garden Club of the Back Bay began working on the first phase of restoring the courtyard to its original format—a formal, Renaissance cloister garden. Plans included introducing bright splashes of color through begonias and geraniums to evoke a cheerfulness characteristic of the Italian formal garden.⁵³⁶

While the plans for the Phase II work make note of work on the roof, cheneau, iron grilles, gutters, and flashing, this work is labeled as N.I.C. (not in contract). Phase II work, which was executed at the time of writing this report, included only work at the arcade and balustrade—the installation of new lead-coated copper flashing, the raking and repointing of all defective joints, the rebuilding and cleaning of the marble balustrade along the promenade, and the installation of new Pennsylvania slate pavers on pedestals on the balustrade level. The arcade roof received a new waterproofing system consisting of a new PVC membrane system with insulation and new through-wall flashing. New granite steps and thresholds were installed and entryways and a new painted steel guard rail similar to the window grilles at the courtyard level were installed just inside the balustrade. Windows at the balustrade level were modified (sills raised to higher elevation) and restored. Other windows in the project work area were also modified, reglazed with insulated glass, stripped and repainted.

8.3 INTERIOR OF THE BUILDING

8.3.1 Basement Floor

Only a few descriptions of the basement level spaces and the main basement stair have been found in the historic drawings or photos. What does exist, indicates that this space was used historically to house the majority of the mechanical systems, in addition to stacks. The 1950's Open Shelf Department in the southeast corner of the Ground Floor extended to the basement where a poetry corner, a smoking area and soundproof listening booths were housed. This basement level public room was reached via a new stair that was added on the north wall of room 202 (original Catalogue Room) during these 1950s changes. In the 1960s, Ames & Graves recognized that this level could be successfully used to house additional services. The men's and women's lavatories were relocated in the area that is currently the stair hall lobby (B12). Book sorting was also moved to the basement level, where the main basement stairs are currently positioned. Before this new stairway was created, the basement was accessed through the elevator and a series of small staircases. The Phase I work converted much of this usable basement space into public reading and reference rooms and discretely introduced new mechanical and sprinkler systems.

Government Documents Work Room (B01)

According to the Phase I plans, the alterations to the area presently referred to as the Government Documents Work Room included: replacement of the existing plaster walls with new gypsum wall board on 7/8 inch furring channeling and; new carpeting replacing the rubber tile on a new concrete slab floor. The existing acoustical tile ceiling was retained.

Corridor (B01a)

In this area during Phase I, new white and black rubber tile was installed as replacement for the existing concrete and brick flooring. New acoustical tiles were suspended from the concrete and Guastavino tile ceiling. New gypsum wall board and flush metal fire doors were also installed.

Government Documents Office (B01b)

During Phase I, this space received new carpeting that replaced the pre-existing rubber tile flooring. Gypsum wall board also replaced the original plaster walls.

Blagden Tunnel (B02)

The rubber tile flooring was removed and replaced with concrete in this area during the Phase I work. In addition the plaster wall and ceiling surfaces were removed to expose the existing granite, brick and Guastavino tile structural materials.

Government Documents (B05)

Phase I work for the Government Documents Room included laying new tweed carpet with a solid border (to replace the existing rubber tile) on the new concrete slab floor that has new HVAC ductwork beneath it; installation of new oak casework with adjustable shelving; installation of new quarter-sawn oak plywood paneling on walls and columns with oak cap and base; installation of new oak service and information counters; and installation of new electrical wiring with a system panel and several floor boxes with brass plates. Above the oak casework, a low spring vaulted ceiling was finished with textured plaster and painted metal vents. There were also eight new half-round globe ceiling-hung light fixtures installed at each bay and a new built-in electrical clock on the east wall. Also included in the work was the positioning of seven free-standing steel shelves, the installation of sprinklers, and recessed lighting over the service desk and entryway on the north wall.

Elevator Lobby (B06)

During the Phase I work, this area received new marble floor pavers and thresholds, a new 1-inch projecting limestone base, cap, and walls, new plaster ceiling, new ceiling-mounted and wall-mounted light fixtures, a new green marble and bronze drinking fountain, and new oak phone enclosures. In addition, a new decorative bronze elevator and janitor's closet doorway were installed.

Stair Hall and Lobby (B12, B08, B11, B18, B19)

The central lobby and corridors on this level were also substantially altered in Phase I since they were now to be open to the public. In those areas that remained closed from the public, such as corridor B18, new acoustical tile ceilings were suspended from the existing Guastavino vault. New 5/8 inch gypsum wall board with plaster veneer was installed on the walls and rubber tile was installed on the floors. In B12, the basement stair vestibule or lobby, new marble floor pavers were laid with 12 types of marble. A new bronze stair rail; limestone bases, walls, and cap; and six new ceiling hung lighting fixtures were installed. Glass exhibit cases with flush bronze framing were installed in the niches or recesses on the north and south walls with bronze woven wire mesh to fill the arches. The stair itself was given an entirely new structure and was renovated with new marble treads, risers, stringer base and landing, and plaster pilasters. In addition to the six hanging light fixtures in the side bays, four new torchieres were placed adjacent to the large piers in the central bay and two wall-mounted fixtures were installed on either side of the door to Science Reference and Government Documents.

Science Reference Room (B15)

The Phase I work done in this space correlated to that done in the Government Documents Room. A new carpet with border (replacing the existing terrazzo) was installed on a new concrete slab floor that had new HVAC ductwork beneath it. This

work also included installation of new oak casework with adjustable shelving and new quarter-sawn oak plywood paneling on walls and columns with oak cap and base; installation of new oak service and information counters; and installation of new electrical panels and several floor boxes. There are also new hanging light fixtures, recessed lights at the south end, and a new built-in electrical clock on the east wall. Also included in the work was the positioning of four typical free-standing steel shelves with custom wood end-panels.

Stacks (B14, B17, B19, B31a, B34)

These areas received similar treatment during the Phase I work: new concrete slab floors, exposed and washed granite, brick, and CMU walls. All granite joints received new waterproof pointing. New paint was applied to the brick or CMU walls and columns.

Tea Room Support / Kitchen (B16b)

During the Phase I work, this area received new quarry tile flooring on a new concrete slab, new stainless steel wall covering over the existing granite and brick surfaces, and new acoustical tile ceiling. New stainless steel kitchen service equipment was installed along the west wall of the space.

Men's and Women's Rooms (B07, B11)

During the Phase I work, the public restrooms were relocated from rooms 212 and 213 on the ground floor to either side of the basement stair. Each restroom is reached through a small lobby that has a marble paver floor, limestone veneer walls, base and cap, and new hanging light fixtures. The restrooms both have new two-inch square mosaic ceramic tile floors and walls, with acoustical ceiling tile suspended from the Guastavino tile vaults. The fluorescent ceiling light fixtures are recessed. In addition to typical plumbing fixtures, both restrooms have new marble partitions and solid wood doors.

8.3.2 Ground Floor

Original Catalogue Room / New Microtext Storage (202)

The SBRA 1990 plans for Phase I indicate the removal of the stair between the basement level and ground floor and the removal of the dumbwaiter, shaft, and all related equipment from the basement level up to and including the mezzanine of the ground floor. The floor and ceiling were enclosed and patched to match the existing surrounding finishes and new floor penetrations were made for HVAC ductwork and future floor grilles.

Basement Stairs and Corridors (206, 208, 207)

Given the symmetry seen throughout the McKim building, it is no surprise that there are matching corridors leading to a central basement stair. However, what is visible now is not part of McKim's original design. Currently, the staircase to the basement level is located directly under the grand stair. However, in 1980, prior to any restoration work, the rooms presently referred to as 206, 207, and 208 were not corridors and a stairway. Instead they were called a "Member's Workroom" and "Graphics Department." The basement level was reached by several small private staircases.

SBRA's Phase I plans involved major alterations to this area. At the time that the corridor spaces were converted into an office space, a cast-in-place reinforced-concrete slab floor was constructed, projecting out of the vaulted ceiling over the staircase. This construction included suspended plaster ceilings, partitions, and other built-in elements. This work also entailed removing the concrete floor slab and portions of the Guastavino barrel vault ceiling, partitions, suspended ceilings, and striping the plaster back to the brick or unit masonry furring. A new Guastavino dome and arches were constructed to match the Guastavino dome at the opposite corner, where the north basement corridor and the basement staircase connect. The new Guastavino dome received a glazed tile finish that matches the tile of the existing dome. A new marble floor was installed in both corridors, along with new marble treads, risers, stringers, and landings at the basement stairs. A new bronze railing was installed down the center of the stair as well as along both walls. New plaster was installed on the walls. The doors and transom centered on the west wall were removed and replaced with a marble reveal and surround. In addition to a new hanging light fixture at each landing, new wall mounted light fixtures were added on both the north and south walls of the staircase and in the corridors.

Vestibule (209)

The 1990 SBRA Phase I plans and specifications called for the removal and salvage of the two bronze handrails, installed in the 1950s during the Milton Lord renovations, and necessary patching in the floor pavers with marble and mortar to match the color of the existing marble pavers. The rest of the marble floor was cleaned and restored. New

decorative floor grilles were installed where new floor penetrations were made for the new HVAC units. On the east wall, new wooden doors and frames were installed at the three openings. The marble cornice, vaults, arches, sculpture panels, walls and base were all cleaned. The MacMonnies bronze statue of Sir Henry Vane and the Daniel Chester French bronze relief doors received conservation treatment.⁵⁵⁷

Entrance Hall (210)

The 1990 floor plans for Phase I called for the removal and salvage of the 1950 brass handrails in the Entrance Hall. In addition, the built-in desks and the exhibit cases in the four niches were to be removed.⁵⁵⁸ Plans specified the cleaning of the marble floor and the removal of existing floor boxes, hardware or other conduits. Scars, made from the removal of these elements in the marble floor pavers, were patched with new marble infills set in colored mortar to match the original existing marble color. As part of this work, an artist documented, removed, and replicated the severely worn bronze intarsia inlays. The new bronze inlay design along with new marble panels was installed in the original layout matching the color and design exactly. It seems that when the Entrance Hall was altered per Lord's direction, two zodiac signs, Aries and Cancer, were relocated to the base of the grand stair. This is because the two book charging desks that were installed directly inside the entry doors covered these two marble panels at the corners of a square layout. In order to keep the signs of the zodiac design complete, these panels had to be moved. The spaces that were left behind were patched with a concrete fill rather than with marble. With the removal of these desks, SBRA specified the restoration of these two bronze inlays to their original location. At this time the rest of the marble floors were cleaned.

When the Lord changes were made, the small square spaces between the Entrance Hall and the basement stair corridors were closed up with partitions, doors, and counters. Asphalt tiles or carpeting was laid down. The 1990 Phase I plans called for the removal of all partitions, doors, or counters, the removal of the floor coverings, and the installation of new 12-inch square marble floor pavers to match the marble floor in the north corridor.

Ground Floor Corridors (203, 205, 211)

The Phase I plans called for the removal of the existing HVAC units in both south and north corridors and their replacement with new floor penetrations and new decorative metal floor grilles. The work during the phase included the repair of the 12-inch square marble tile floor in the north corridor. The existing terrazzo floor minus the marble border stones in the south corridor was replaced with new 12-inch square marble pavers that match those in the north corridor. The decorative painting on the plaster wall surface above the marble dado was cleaned to determine the original paint scheme. The walls were then repainted with the original Pompeian motif in red, yellow ochre, and

olive green. An area of the original soiled paint was retained on the south wall of the north corridor to illustrate the contrast between the condition of the restored and original paint. New historic quarter-sawn oak doors were installed along the north corridor. All the marble dado and door surrounds were cleaned, and new hanging light fixtures were installed.

The elevator lobby, which is located in the south corridor just off the Entrance Hall, had been altered over the years with the installation of wall-mounted display case, phone booths, and a drinking fountain. The original terrazzo floor with marble border remained until 1990, as did possibly the original elevator cab. However, Phase I plans specified the removal of the elevator enclosure and the installation of a new two-hour rated enclosure and a new cab and the replacement of the terrazzo floor with new 12-inch white marble floor pavers and rose marble border. The display cases, phone booths, and drinking fountain were all removed as well.

Original Lavatory/New Bookstore (212 & 213)

Prior to the restoration work, this area was the location of the women's and men's lavatories.

Original Periodical Reading Room / New Catalogue Room (214)

During the 1990s, the Government Documents Department was moved into an area that had previously housed the original Periodical Reading Room. In preparation for receiving the Government Documents Department, this area was freshly painted and the terrazzo floor cleaned and polished. The brick fireplace, long covered, was exposed. The two adjacent rooms, formerly the Periodical Reading and Reference Rooms (215, 216), were converted to work and stack space for the Government Documents Department.⁵⁵⁹

This room is at present being used as the Catalogue Room. The Government Documents Department was moved back to its original location (B05) after completion of Phase I restoration. As part of the Phase I restoration, the Rooms 215 and 216 were converted into the Information and Tea Room, respectively.

The 1990 SBRA plans specified the removal of casework, the built-in southwest doorway, and the built-in service desk and shelves. The existing terrazzo floor was removed and replaced with a new marble floor with floor penetrations for new HVAC and decorative metal floor grilles. Plans also called for a new spiral stair and modified landing in the northwest corner to provide access to the existing balcony and matching the one in Room 406 (original Children's Room). However, this was never built, and a straight stair was installed instead. Existing bookcases and wall sconces were removed from the north wall. On both the north and east exterior walls, the existing plaster was removed and replaced by new textured plaster applied to new metal lath over new insulation and vapor barrier.

New rectangular grilles were added beneath the windows on the north wall along with new brick dado at piers and pilasters. The existing chandeliers were refurbished and relocated in the eight central bays. The existing book elevator on the east wall was closed. The Phase I plans also called for the installation of new insulated double-glazed windows with UV filtering with the outer glass set in the existing wood frame.

Original Current Periodical Room / New Information Room (215)

This room is among the most changed in the past decade. The 1990 Phase I plans called for the removal and salvage of the existing wood balcony and stair that wrapped around the east, south, and west walls. This was necessary because it was specified that a new partition wall be built on the north side of the room. This wall was to contain new frosted glass in new wood frames matching the existing window dimensions and positions on the original north exterior wall. The plans also called for new brick dado to match existing, new textured plaster, new brick arches, and central oculus with built-in electric clock. On the south wall, two new doors were installed, one in the existing opening (west) and one in a new opening (east). The new doorway included a new frame to match the opposite opening with a wedge-shaped brick flat arch and sandstone corner blocks. The existing grilles on the east and west walls were removed and new brick was toothed in to match the existing brick. Floor penetrations with new decorative floor grilles were installed. The glazed door into the Catalogue Room (214) is new. The bronze wall-mounted light fixtures were installed at this time on the east and west walls. The chandelier was relocated from Room 216 to this room to make way for the installation of the chandelier from the Grand Staircase Hall. The painted finish on the coffered terra cotta ceiling was removed.

Original Boylston Street Driveway / New Tea Room (216)

It is likely that during the changes made under Milton Lord's direction, rubber tile was put down on the floor. In 1981, the Stull Report recommended its removal and the repair or replacement of the original terrazzo floor. However, during the 1990 changes, a new marble floor was installed, along with new marble dado, base, and door surround on the east wall. The walls received new plaster base and skim coats with a new lighting molding recessed into the existing plaster with concealed wiring beneath a new wooden picture molding. The Phase I plans called for new glazed doors to be installed on the east wall with a 1/4-inch marble raised panel above. However, due to the current use of the room these doors are not in place. The domed plaster ceiling has a large central globe chandelier that dates to the 1950s. At the time of this writing, the plaster and paint in this dome were already showing signs of deterioration and failure. On the north wall where the three large openings suggest the original use of this room as the porte cochere, the existing glass panels, doors, and fanlight received minor repairs. The hardware of the small central sash of each fanlight was removed and the lights fixed.

These changes were all made with the intention of converting this space from its current use as a Periodical Room to a Tea Room. These changes in use prompted the changes in the room next door (215). In order to make use of eating/drinking facilities, there would need to be a support room adjoining the space to accommodate the service needs. Room 216a, the Tea Room Support Space, was created by splitting the Current Periodical Room (215) next door with the installation of a partition. This produced a small “galley” kitchen along the exterior wall that opens out to the “Tea Room.” Within this space there is a stair to the basement and new food service equipment, new dumbwaiter, new stainless steel ductwork, new HVAC, and new fan coil units (FCUs), along with new finish materials like plaster, quarry tile floor and base, and light fixtures. Needless to say, these changes have greatly altered the original appearance of this room.

Original Bindery / New Newspaper Department (218)

Phase II work in this space will involve substantial changes to make this room the New Newspaper Department. They include the removal of the existing spiral stair to the mezzanine, the existing dumbwaiter to the basement, the existing desk and newspaper slots, the existing center partition, and the existing door and wall in 218a. The existing wood balcony is to be refurbished, as are the existing wood cabinets. There will be new wood newspaper cabinets, new metal shelving with metal end panels, new carpet and electrical floor boxes, new marble stools and decorative grilles at window openings, and new FCUs. The existing spiral stair will be replaced with a new metal straight stair having 14 risers. A new wall will be built to the center of the column and underside of the cross beam. There will be new marble bases at the plaster walls and at the columns.

The Newspaper Room cabinets will consist of 1-inch by 3-inch strapping attached to the wall, 3/4-inch oak veneer particle board, 1/2-inch oak veneer plywood with edge banding and solid oak molding and trim. The base will be marble. The Reference desk will have a new framed opening to the stacks, a wood veneer counter top with solid wood edges finished to match the balcony.

The mezzanine level of the Newspaper Room will have a new dumbwaiter, new work counter with plastic laminate finish, new free-standing metal bookstacks with wood stile and rail end panels at the end of each row. These bookstacks will be approximately 36 inches wide and 66 inches high. There will also be new bookcases built into the perimeter walls on the east and west sides with lights mounted on the top of the entire length of the bookcases.

The room will have new historic light fixtures suspended from the vaulted ceiling. On the east wall there is an existing door opening leading into the Elliott Room. A new metal railing with a cherry wood handrail will be installed at the stair. On the north wall the existing decorative metal grilles will be removed, refurbished, and reinstalled with the

new FCUs along this wall. The windows will have new plaster with a splayed finish at the reveals and new marble stools. There will be new newspaper cabinets along the south and east walls.

Original Newspaper Files Room / New Northwest Corridor (223)

The area of the McKim building historically known as the Newspaper Files Room received substantial attention during Phase II of the 1990s restoration. This area is the general ground floor link between the McKim Building and the Johnson Building and, therefore, it was the intention of the following alterations to provide a clear and open passageway between the key areas of the two buildings. The demolition of this space included removing all interior masonry walls and the masonry partition and door on the north wall, removing the existing floor slab and structure, cutting a new opening in the north wall, removing the existing plaster the full height and length of the north wall, and removing the existing steps, posts, railings, and platform of what was the West Service Stair. These stairs were removed completely down to the basement. The coverings of the four central columns were stripped. The demolition called for the removal of masonry walls and floors in this space from the Ground floor through Stack 3, doubling the original height of this space to an elevation of 22 feet, 1-1/4 inches. A new metal elevator enclosure was installed on the north wall between the McKim and the Johnson Buildings, and the west service staircase was rebuilt. The stairway was finished with marble walls, ceiling, stair treads, and landing. There are light fixtures at each landing. Finishes in the Northwest Corridor include new plaster walls with marble dado. The center columns were fitted with reinforced plaster covers. Plaster niches with marble sills were created over the doors on the north and south walls. In addition to the new stairs, elevator cab, and handicap lift, two new drinking fountains, new smoke detectors, and sprinklers were added. The lighting consists of new custom lights in the center of each square of the new plaster coffer ceiling. Two new ceiling hung light fixtures similar to the chandelier in the "Tea Room" (1950s Grand Stair chandelier) were installed.

The new entry from Room 223 to the Newspaper Department (218) incorporates new marble frame and wood doors.

Microtext Department (225, 226, 230, 235)

During the Phase II work in Room 225, the existing level 3 floor was removed to make the area open to above. In addition, an existing door and frame, partitions, and windows were removed. New smooth plaster walls, pilasters, and cornice were installed on all wall surfaces while new rigid insulation with a vapor barrier was adhered to the existing exterior (east) wall. The upper windows will have new splayed sides and bottom in a smooth plaster finish. A new marble base was installed, and the vaulted ceiling was finished with a rough acoustical plaster.

Room 226 underwent some alterations during the Phase II work. These changes included the installation of new wood shelves on the east and southwest walls, the removal of existing partitions, and the removal of an existing door and frame. New gypsum wall board, vinyl bases, and typical stack lights were also installed. During this work, reading carrels were developed in the space between rooms 225 and 226. These carrels have a solid wood desktop surface that is 2-feet, 6-inches deep, new plaster walls on either side, and a low partition separating each carrel bay. The low partition has a 3/4-inch solid wood backsplash that is carried around on the three sides of the desktop with a 1/3-inch solid wood reveal, and the partition is capped with a 1 1/2-inch by 5 5/8-inch solid wood cap. This area also has new marble bases and a new plaster ceiling.

Room 230 had five new FCUs installed on the south wall during Phase II, as well as a new sink, counter, and shelving on the west wall and a low partition with plastic laminate countertops on either side.

Phase II work for Room 235 included the installation of two new wood paneling on the west wall and adjustable shelves with wood countertops at the service counter and against the south, north, and east walls. New smooth-finish plaster was added on the walls above the new oak casework. New bronze grilles were installed at the pilasters where FCUs were added. An existing wall and door in the middle of the room, and a new stand up reference desk were removed.

The corridor that connects these rooms in the Microtext Department also underwent some changes during the Phase II work. These alterations included the removal of the existing partitions and interior windows and patching of all existing plaster where demolition had occurred.

8.3.3 Stack One

Dupe Exchange (101a)

Phase I work involved the creation of a new structural opening for ductwork, furring out the ductwork and the installation of new ductwork the entire length of the room. Typical stack finishes included new metal stacks, new stack lighting that consists of ceiling mounted fluorescent fixtures, new corridor lights and fire detectors, new vinyl corner protector on all plaster wrapped columns and wall corners, and new gypsum wall board on "Z" channels.

Special Purchase (101b)

This space received the typical stack alterations and finishes during the Phase I work, including new stack lighting consisting of ceiling-mounted fluorescent fixtures, new corridor lights and fire detectors, and new vinyl corner protector on all plaster wrapped columns and wall corners.

Gift Process (101c)

Phase I work in this area included the removal of the existing door and ramp and blocking up the opening with 4-hour rated construction. In addition, this area received the typical stack alterations and finishes consisting of new metal stacks, new stack lighting which consists of ceiling mounted fluorescent fixtures, and new gypsum wall board on "Z" channels.

Special Materials (101d)

The plumbing was removed from this area during the Phase I work.

Stack (102)

Phase I work in this area included the installation of a new partition at Stair 7. In addition, typical stack alterations and finishes, comprising new ductwork, new metal stacks, new stack lighting, which consists of ceiling-mounted fluorescent fixtures, and a new vinyl corner protector on all plaster wrapped columns and wall corners, were included.

Stack (103)

Phase I work in this area included wrapping the existing dumbwaiter with gypsum wall board furring, installation of a new handwash station, removal of a partition and raised floor, patching the floor with new rubber tile, and work on the walls and ceiling to match surrounding finishes. This area also received the typical stack alterations and finishes, consisting of new metal stacks, new stack lighting (ceiling-mounted fluorescent fixtures), and new gypsum wall board on "Z" channels.

Stair 6

The existing railing was removed and replaced with a new 1 3/8-inch pipe handrail during the work of Phase I. New rubber tile flooring was installed at this time, as was the new standpipe.

8.3.4 Bates Hall Floor

Grand Staircase Hall (Stair 1)

The work in this area in the Phase I scope included the replacement of the glazing in the existing wood frame windows with new stops, stripping paint from the window frames, and repainting. All marble surfaces were cleaned. The Puvis de Chavannes murals and their wood frames were restored, and the lion statues including the shield relief and lettering on their bases received conservation treatment by a statuary conservator (Appendix 11.9). The stair treads, risers, and platform landings were all cleaned, and the rubber treads were removed from the bottom two steps. The existing light standards on the landings were all refurbished. The largest alteration to this area during the phase of work was the installation of a new chandelier. The large globe fixture that was installed during Lord's 1950s alterations was found to be inappropriate given the academic nature of the restoration of this area. The replacement fixture, although not original, is styled appropriately from the same period. Historic photos, however, do not show a hanging light fixture in the Grand Staircase Hall.

Delivery Room a.k.a. Abbey Room (401)

In 1975, while departments were being reorganized as a result of the opening of the Johnson Building, Research Library Catalogues were moved out of the Abbey Room and relocated in the Elliott Room. With this move completed, the Abbey Room was restored to its original state and continued to serve as the delivery point for books from the Research Library stacks. Restoration work included cleaning and polishing the marble floor and refinishing the woodwork. It was at this time that the ornately carved teakwood antique table with pink marble top was placed in the center of the room, although currently it is located in the Venetian Lobby. This table apparently was the library table of Antonio Panizzi of the British Museum from 1856 to 1877 and was presented to former BPL trustee, George B. Chase.

In 1981, Stull Associates noted in their room-by-room survey that changes had only been made in lighting and with the doors. The pigskin-upholstered doors into Bates Hall had been removed or altered, and the double oak doors to the Pompeiian Lobby were replaced with glazed doors around 1963. Over the years an addition was made to a single window on the South wall, as well as lighting changes to illuminate murals in this dark, "medieval" or "English manor" room.

Pompeiian Lobby (402)

The Pompeiian Lobby includes the elevator lobby. In the Phase I scope of work the elevator enclosure was removed and replaced with a new 2-hour rated fire enclosure. It is not certain if the original elevator was extant at the time of replacement. The small janitor's closet beside the elevator shaft was equipped with a new FF standpipe with a Fire

Department valve and extinguisher. The SBRA drawings and specifications called for the replacement of the original lion-head fountain spout. However, this does not appear to have been done. The partition in the niche overlooking Stair 2 was removed and the opening patched to match the surrounding finish where necessary. The light fixture from the existing landing was refurbished and relocated, and the existing wood doors to the Abbey Room (401) were modified. The sandstone panel over the doorway to the Abbey Room and the paintings on the wall surfaces were conserved (Appendix 11.9). All the marble and sandstone surfaces were cleaned.⁵⁶⁰

Puvis de Chavannes Gallery (403)

In 1975, while departments were being reorganized as a result of the opening of the Johnson Building, the research library catalogues formerly housed in part in the Chavannes Gallery were relocated to the Elliott Room. Once cleared of these catalogues, the Chavannes Gallery was restored to its original state.⁵⁶¹

The Phase I work for this space involved cleaning the existing marble floor and removal of the existing frames, central glazed doors, and transom (including the floor pivot closers) in order to modify and re-swing the existing gates and frame. Where the floor pivot closures were removed at both jambs, the marble was patched. Within the stair vestibule, the existing partitions to Stairs 2 and 3 were removed, and new wall-mounted wood handrails were installed in the stairs. The existing decorative painted vaulted ceilings and existing metal brackets were cleaned and touched-up with special painting. Two new chandeliers matching the central Grand Staircase Hall chandelier were installed; existing electrical conduits were removed; and all marble and sandstone was cleaned.

Venetian Lobby (404)

Phase I work in this space included removal of HVAC equipment and installation of new HVAC. This work also included the installation of new face grilles in the niche on the east wall. The marble floor pavers were cleaned, as were the sandstone walls. A new ceiling-hung light fixture was installed, along with new lighting fixtures at the dome spandrels. The existing decorative metal grilles were removed, while the sandstone dado was sawcut vertically between the upper and lower opening to create a new opening. A new decorative metal grille was installed matching the pattern of the grilles in the Lecture Room (214) yet flush with the sandstone. The wall paintings were restored, and all masonry surfaces were cleaned.⁵⁶²

Bates Hall (405)

In addition to the various regulations for local and State codes, it was necessary during the Phase II work to comply with the standards of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the National Park Service (NPS). The Library, as a National Historic Landmark and a private, non-profit organization, had applied for and received a grant to

support the restoration and rehabilitation of Bates Hall as part of the larger restoration and rehabilitation project already underway. As part of the agreement for the grant award, the Library agreed to comply with all applicable regulations and procedures governing Federal grants as well as the applicable Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Issues addressed during the Bates Hall restoration included: removal of existing partitions, casework, and terrazzo flooring located in apsidal ends; installation of new access panels over the new fan-coil units on the east wall; treatment of the blind-arch panels on the west wall; installation of new light fixtures; and conservation of the decorative painting on the coffered ceiling.

Mechanical

Prior to Phase II, Bates Hall was heated through the use of steam radiators set into recesses in the exterior wall beneath each window on the East wall. These radiators were removed, leaving a wall cavity to be filled with a new fan-coil unit (FCU) and necessary piping. In most areas, the FCUs were accommodated within the existing openings with very limited granite cutting. Some bookcases had to be removed and reinstalled to allow for the installation of pipe risers. Retrofitting the new FCUs into the old radiator location proved to be a tight fit. It was desirable to provide a drain pan that was as deep as possible. These drain pans were 1 1/2-inch deep, extended under the piping valves at the ends of the FCUs, and included a leak detection system. Once installed, these FCUs were to be concealed with a fiberglass access panel measuring approximately 2 feet, 6 inches by 9 feet, 6 inches. The panels were cast to match the appearance of the leather-textured plaster panels of the west wall. They needed to be light in weight and operable to afford access to the fan-coil units.

In addition to installation of a new heating system, efforts were made to allow for the installation of the maximum possible raceways and conduits in the floors for electrical and telecommunications wiring. The terrazzo floors of Bates Hall, which are not original, were targeted as the logical areas to introduce the necessary conduits. Initially, only the terrazzo fields in the north and south service areas were to be cut and replaced. The central aisle in the main reading room, which is floored with marble pavers, was initially intended to be carefully lifted to allow for the cutting of the setting bed, the laying of conduit, and the replacement of the original stones. However, it was determined early on as the initial floor work commenced that the available depth of the existing setting bed was limited in its ability to accommodate the amount of new conduit planned. In addition, the very tight joints between the marble pavers made it difficult to remove the stones without damaging the stone edges or the adjacent pavers. In response to these discoveries, the architects of Shepley Bullfinch Richardson and Abbott and of the NPS decided to relocate the proposed conduit to the terrazzo floor area on either side of the center aisle. This relocation was felt to be appropriate since the existing terrazzo is

neither original, unique, nor difficult to match, and it had already been specified to be patched in some areas.

Electrical

Historic photographs were used to determine the original lighting fixtures in Bates Hall. New fixtures were then based on archival photos and surviving fixtures. Existing standing lamps were plugged into new flush floor outlets, and new floor boxes were installed in the new terrazzo under the reading tables. The existing fluorescent fixtures were removed from the tables and bookcases in order to restore the style and configuration of the original. The new light fixtures were designed to be consistent with the design concept for the new casework. Essentially, the new work was not intended as a reconstruction of an earlier feature or a copy of the original. The details of the new work were compatible and sympathetic to the original, but not an exact match or replica. Hence, upon closer inspection the new work could be recognized as not being original. The fixtures for the existing casework were modified as a result of evidence found in enlarged period photographs. The original lighting fixtures were shown to include a “monkey’s tail” detail at the end of the fixture’s arm. The architects used this detail on the old casework fixtures to help define the difference between the original and new casework. In the staff and service areas, such as the copier locations and under cabinets, the architect specified a fluorescent lamp that approximates the quality of light of a typical incandescent lamp. Given their separation from the main public areas of Bates Hall, these fixtures should have very little visual impact on the rest of the reading room.

Furnishings

Bates Hall was originally constructed with elaborately carved built-in casework around the perimeter of the room. Two wood casework screens separated the middle reading room from the north and south service spaces. During the twentieth century, additional partitions, shelving, and work surfaces had been built. Review of the historic photographs, as well as visual inspection on site, revealed that these items were not original. Phase II, therefore, called for the removal of these elements in order to design more functional services and layout for these areas. The new casework and furnishing were intended not to be a reconstruction of an earlier feature or a copy of the original casework. Their design was intended to balance current programmatic needs with the limitations of the existing space. They were planned to be built of material that matched the oak of the original, with details that were compatible and sympathetic, but not exactly matching. In this manner the original could be distinguished from the new work. The original casework and reading tables were stripped and refinished. The tables were refitted with new lighting fixtures approximating the originals in design and appearance.

Decorative Finishes

The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA) conducted a paint study of the coffered plaster ceiling in Bates Hall that indicated the ceiling was originally painted an ivory with a light blue in the color fields. It was also revealed that all original painted surfaces had been recoated. In other major spaces of the library very sophisticated ceiling and upper wall treatments had been found, including faux finishes, glazes, spot tonings and accent colors. It was expected, therefore, that the original vaulted ceiling had received a glaze or other toning measure. However, repeated examination of the existing physical evidence showed no trace of glazing or toning. This presented a question that remained unanswered—would the Bates Hall ceiling have originally been given such a simple, plain treatment? Many agreed it might have been because the room was never finished. The original plans for Bates Hall intended for major murals in the north end apse wall field and all of the west wall blind arches. In fact, studies showed that these wall surfaces were prepared in anticipation of this artwork. It may have been that the final treatment of the barrel vault was to have been made after the murals were installed in place.

It was the intent of the project to restore Bates Hall to its original grandeur. The challenge was in pinpointing a time representative of the room's original state. This challenge was exacerbated by the documented evidence that the room was never completed as originally intended by McKim. With regard to treatment of the vaulted ceiling, the architects lacked any direct physical evidence or documentary research that could prove any finishing decorative treatment was present. On the other hand, a finish treatment, whether it be a glaze or toning to embellish the final coat of paint, was consistent not only with the styles of a building of this period, but also with McKim. It was also typical of other spaces within the BPL. Therefore, it was the collaborative recommendation of the design team to include a finish treatment of glaze. Although not based on physical evidence, it was considered an acceptable, subtle addition to the decorative paint scheme for the ceiling. The Library and National Park Service approved the measure as it brought the richness and harmony originally intended by McKim in the overall design of the room.

The proposed treatment of the west wall blind arches was another dilemma encountered as a result of the reading room never being completed as McKim planned. The architects' approach to the west wall arches was based on McKim's original intention. In using the Bibliotheque St. Genevieve as a model, McKim's Boston Public Library building plan did not allow it to receive the natural light from both sides. It was also understood that given the layout of the space and the inability to have windows on all sides, McKim had to resolve the resultant blind arches and he had consider doing so by filling the west wall arches with fine art murals. However, documentation provides no tangible evidence that this was ever fully pursued. The restoration architects proposed to fill the west wall

panels with mirrors glazed in the same manner and configuration as the east wall windows. It was envisioned to be a subtle intervention consistent with the character of Bates Hall, the period, and the Bibliotheque precedent. After much careful consideration, the National Park Service determined that they would not approve of the infill of the blind arches of Bates Hall's west wall with mirrors glazed to match the arched windows of the east wall. The plaster in the blind arches was therefore repainted to match the original paint color.

Original Children's Room / Catalogue Room (406)

The space, which was originally the Children's Room, was converted for use as the Catalogue Room in the pre-1990s restoration alterations. During Phase II of the current project, Room 406 was still undergoing significant restoration with the planned reinstallation of a metal spiral stair to match the one removed in the 1920s and the original existing one in the northeast corner. New posts and railing to match the mezzanine railing will be added at the east doorway. Work completed includes the installation of new leather-covered doors to Bates Hall. The existing marble hearth was cleaned while new 18-inch by 18-inch marble floor tiles were installed within a marble border. Seven new floor electric boxes were incorporated in the new flooring. In addition to the wooden balcony floor, the existing wooden casework on the north wall and around the mezzanine were restored and refinished. All original finishes were restored; the iron columns were repainted; the balcony fascia was cleaned and wax polished; and the decorative plaster and cornice were repaired and repainted in original colors. Besides the restoration of the decorative finishes, this space received a new Fire Department valve in a cabinet on the south wall and new metal HVAC grilles in the marble bases. The electric and telephone boxes were removed, and the walls behind were patched and refinished. New wood casework was added to the east, south, and west walls. A new service desk was provided in the Southeast corner of the room using portions of a desk salvaged from Bates Hall. All windows were restored.

Original Patent Library a.k.a. Elliott Room / New Delivery Room (407)

In 1975 during the changes made in conjunction with relocating departments for the General and the Research Libraries, the Elliott Room received the Research Library Catalogs that had previously been housed in the Chavannes Gallery and the Abbey Room. Before receiving the catalogues, the Elliott Room had functioned as the Government Documents Department.

Through the work of Phase II, this space was restored for use as a Delivery Room. Restoration work in this space was to consist of the removal, repair, and refinishing of the decoratively leafed and glazed canvases on the walls above casework. The existing finish was to be removed down to the aluminum leaf; any cracks in the leaf were to be repaired and filled, and a glazing treatment was to be reapplied. During construction it was

determined that the original finishes could not be adequately restored. They were left in place (except for the south wall), and new canvas, leaf, and glaze were applied over them. The existing wooden casework was repaired where necessary and refinished with all door and window hardware refitted. Windows were restored with new insulated glass. On the south and north walls the damaged backboard of the bookcase was replaced to match the surrounding existing bookcases. The existing wall sconces were retained with new glass globes to match the existing originals. On the south wall the existing metal FCU cover was restored with decorative paint to simulate wood paneling. The damaged plaster ceiling and left side panel of the window reveal on the south wall were replaced or repaired. On the west wall a new opening will be introduced with a new paneled door to allow for wheelchair access to the new lift. The ceiling mural was cleaned and restored by conservators from the Fogg Museum.

Original Lecture Hall / New Periodical Bibliographic Center (410)

The space, formerly known as the Lecture Hall, has undergone substantial alterations during Phase II. This work consisted of removal of the existing partition at the north openings, removal of the existing speakers, grilles in all bays, and casework, in order to replaster the walls and window reveals, install a new doorway to the Northwest Hall, and relocate the HVAC vents. The existing HVAC openings were blocked up and new openings were cut above. New bronze grilles were provided at the location of the new FCUs. A new marble base was installed. The existing marble doorframe on the east wall and Guastavino tile ceiling were cleaned. The new opening to the Northwest Hall included new marble frame matching the other existing frame and new wood doors. While the SBRA plans for Phase II indicated that the work in this room was to include a new book belt enclosure running west to east at the ceiling level, this apparently has not been executed. On all walls, new wood casework and cabinets with radiused crown molding were added. The north wall received new plaster walls to infill the existing stage opening.

Original Patent Room & Statistical Department / New Northwest Corridor (414)

In 1975, the Boston Public Library Patent Collection, which had long been housed at Emmanuel College and Newton College, was moved to the McKim building and located in this area.⁵⁶³

During Phase II work in progress at the time of this writing, this area was being converted from the Exhibit Room and historically the Patent Room to the upper floor of the Northwest Hall. This area provides the link between the Bates Hall Floor of the McKim building and the second level of the Johnson Building. During this work the existing ramp down to the Johnson Building was removed to make way for a new incline. The existing plaster and flooring were removed down to the masonry and concrete slab. This space received new plaster wall finish and marble base. The lower windows received new

marble sills. A new custom wood service desk was installed at the south wall, and there will be two new drinking fountains on the west wall.

Original Stack 5 / New Periodical Department (415, 416)

During Phase II, the partition separating rooms 415 and 416, the partition and door at the landing down to stairs, the built-in shelves, and the electric water coolers were all removed. New FCUs were installed between bays 3 and 4. New gypsum wall board, vinyl base, and metal bookcases were also installed.

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8.3.5 Special Library Floor

Work on the top floor, or Special Libraries Floor, at the time of this writing is planned for Phase IIC. It was previously completed to the design development stage. The main objective of the Phase IIC work for this floor is to reopen many of the spaces to the public and provide full circulation, as originally intended.

West Gallery (712)

As part of the reorganization of the Research Library Departments, new openings were created for the Reference and Reading Rooms for Music and Fine Arts in the West Gallery. A new elevator was opened to facilitate accessibility of these departments.

Original Barton Library / Charlotte Cushman Room (705)

The area that had previously been used by the Music Department was refurbished once the Music and Fine Arts Departments relocated to the West Gallery. This space, previously called the Barton-Ticknor Room, was renamed the Charlotte Cushman Room to house materials on the theater donated by the Charlotte Cushman Club in Boston.⁵⁶⁴

Dwiggins Gallery (704)

An exhibition space⁵⁶³ was opened adjacent to the Rare Books and Manuscripts Department, an area that included the Dwiggins Gallery and the Serge Koussevitzky Exhibition area.⁵⁶⁵

9.0 1990s Project: Code Compliance

- 9.1 Introduction**
- 9.2 Compliance with ADA Requirements**
- 9.3 Fire Safety**
- 9.4 Elevator Safety**
- 9.5 Secretary of the Interior's Standards**

Rehabilitation is defined as:

The act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.⁵⁶⁸

9.0 1990s Project: Code Compliance

9.1 INTRODUCTION

A construction project as extensive and costly as the restoration and renovation of the Boston Public Library triggers many levels of review and compliance. In addition to complying with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties due to the use of State and Federal funding, the Library had to meet various State and local building and safety codes. This involved asbestos removal and lead paint abatement in areas affected by construction; compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and compliance with fire detection, suppression, and egress codes and elevator safety codes.

Consistent with the philosophy recommended by *The Building Official and Code Administrator*, Shepley Bullfinch Richardson and Abbott (SBRA) "involved local officials early on" to resolve code conflicts during the design development phase. When making provisions in the building code for historic buildings, such as the Boston Public Library, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts adopted a "performance" approach. This approach attempted to strike a balance between code compliance and historic preservation by providing guidance for the architects and code officials without actually trying to determine the solutions. The architects of SBRA and the City of Boston's Inspectional Services Department worked in collaboration to develop creative solutions and appropriate alternatives that recognized the value and importance of both life safety and preservation issues.

Life safety categories that required analysis included: fire rating of corridor partitions; extent of automatic alarms; capacity of exits; and maximum travel distances. Accessibility issues that needed to be assessed included: building and site entrances; surface textures; widths and slopes of walkways; parking; grade changes; size, weight, and configurations of doorways; interior corridors and paths of travel restrictions; elevators; and public toilets and amenities.

9.2 COMPLIANCE WITH ADA REQUIREMENTS

SBRA began the process of compliance with local and state ADA requirements by inviting the Massachusetts Architectural Barriers Board (now the Architectural Access Board) to tour the McKim building and part of the Johnson Building in April of 1988. This meeting was followed up by a request for variances for the following sections:

- Section 26.1, relating to the primary entrance on Dartmouth Street. Code compliance required an access ramp to ascend the height of the platform steps. The variance requested would permit the Library to avoid constructing a new ramp and to continue to use and acknowledge the entrance into the Johnson Building as the main accessible entrance with its direct proximity to handicapped parking.
- Section 27.7, relating to the doors of the historical rooms. Code compliance requires the thresholds of the doors to be flush with floor surface. As the doorways presently exist, the marble thresholds project 3/4 inch up from the floor level.
- Section 28.2, relating to the projection of tread nosing of Stairs #2, 3, & 4.
- Section 28.3, relating to the wall rails of Stairs #1 & 4 that do not extend 12 inches beyond the top and bottom of the risers.
- Section 28.4, relating to the handrails of Stair #4 which, according to the code, exceed the maximum width of 2 inches and have a molded shape.
- Given the architectural significance of the McKim building, all of the variances requested were based on historic considerations.

Drawings produced by SBRA for presentation to the Architectural Access Board illustrated the existing conditions and the existing architectural barriers prior to construction. These conditions were compared with the proposed handicapped accessibility solutions resulting in the first phase, as well as those fully completed through Phase II. At a hearing held on June 27, 1988, the Architectural Access Board reviewed the materials submitted and voted to grant the variances.

Phase I restoration and renovation work included much of the ground floor spaces and reclaiming spaces for public use in the basement level. This work also included the replacement of the existing elevator and the installation of public restrooms on the basement level. The new elevator provided easy access to all public floors in the McKim building. Those barriers not addressed during Phase I continued in the work of the second phase.

The intention of Phase II was to restore the public passageway along the entire north and east wings. In addition, with the construction of the new northwest corner entrance hall, it was necessary to create a clear, barrier-free path from the Johnson Building to Bates Hall that negotiated all the changes in floor levels. To address these changes in floor

levels, modifications to stairways and the installation of wheel chair lifts were required. The plans presented to the Architectural Access Board clearly illustrated that in each location where a staircase was a barrier for a direct path, an elevator, lift, or ramp was located within close proximity. Elevators that had previously been inaccessible, due to door widths or cab size, were altered or replaced to meet the necessary standards. Much effort was made to insure a universal, primary, horizontal circulation path. However, where an alternate circulation path was necessary, for example to approach a lift or elevator, this path was made independently accessible and as close to the main route as was possible.

9.3 FIRE SAFETY

SBRA began the review process for fire code compliance in the summer of 1988. This process was initiated when the City Building Commissioner refused to grant a building permit for the proposed restoration work. This refusal was based on the determination that the building and the proposed work was in violation of the Massachusetts State Building Code, Statute 1972, Chapter 802. The following sections were cited as code violations:

- Section 2203.7 addressing the number of exits such that any existing building shall provide at least two means of egress at every story;
- Section 2203.8 concerning the capacity of exits;
- Section 2203.11 addressing the installation of fire alarm systems; and
- Section 2203.12 addressing the enclosure of stairways.

Under the current fire safety codes, open stairways were prohibited except in one- and two-family dwellings or unless otherwise permitted by Article 6. New partitions or construction added to fully enclose a stairway were required to provide a minimum fire-resistance rating of one hour. All doors in the enclosure are required to be self-closing and tight-fitting with approved hardware.

Following the denial of the building permit, a request for a variance was submitted to the Board of Appeal of the City of Boston. A formal appeal was also presented to the Board on August 23, 1988. The principal relief sought by the Library centered on the requirement that egress stairways be enclosed. In particular, the Library proposed not to enclose the grand central stairway of the McKim Building or use it as a necessary exit. Exclusion of this stairway as an exit in no way effected the capacity or number of exits for the building. The architects proposed alternate methods for fire detection and

suppression, and demonstrated how these alternate methods would benefit the public safety. These alternative methods included installation of smoke detectors above and beyond those required, installation of Fire Department standpipes up through the building with numerous Fire Department valves, introduction of sprinklers in all public areas below grade, a new fire alarm system, and an agreement to maintain a library emergency evacuation plan. Upon review of the Library's proposal, the Board of Appeal found that the work would increase public safety of the historic building. They recognized that strict compliance of the existing Building Code was unwarranted and that no hazard would be presented to the occupants of the building by granting the variances requested. Furthermore, literal enforcement of the Building Code would alter the architectural integrity of the significant historic structure.

The rooms on the Basement level were equipped with a wet-pipe sprinkler system, since below-grade rooms are the most difficult to access to fight and extinguish a fire. Sprinklers were also installed in the renovated public circulation areas, such as Rooms 223 and 414 of the Northwest Corridor. Other methods were employed to increase the fire safety by means of detection, suppression and egress. Detection methods included the installation of smoke detectors and alarm devices. The smoke detectors installed in the Boston Public Library are all of the photoelectric type with a transmitter that shoots a light beam to a receiver. When smoke particles scatter or lower the intensity of the light beam, the receiver responds with an alarm. Photoelectric detectors have been installed in rooms 214, 215, 223, 406, and 410.

Also, two layers of gypsum wall board were installed at the ceiling in rooms 218 and 410, and intumescent paint was used on the exposed metal truss in room 410 as additional means of fire suppression.

9.4 ELEVATOR SAFETY

Phase I work called for the replacement of the existing main cage elevator cab that was in violation of the State Building Code. McKim's original design incorporated an open-cage wrought-iron cab that was lit by daylight as it moved from one floor to the next. The elevator shaft on the central courtyard side included windows at the various floor levels. These windows not only illuminated the elevator cab but allowed light to pass through to the elevator lobbies. With the Building Code requiring the removal of the open cage design, the architects felt very strongly about restoring one very important element associated with the original design—the re-introduction of natural light into the cab. The State Elevator Inspector in the Department of Public Safety noted during his inspection, on March 16, 1994, that the existing windows in the hoistway or shaft were in violation of 524 CMRC and the new glass in the elevator cab was in violation of Rule 204.1h. The architects responded by requesting a variance to allow the existing window in the hoistway

to remain and by agreeing to use 5/16-inch laminated safety glass with wire grilles on the inside of the window openings of the cab.

9.5 SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS

In addition to the various regulations for local and State codes, it was necessary during the Phase II work to comply with the standards of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the National Park Service (NPS). The Library, as a National Historic Landmark and a private, non-profit organization, had applied for and received a grant to support the restoration and rehabilitation of Bates Hall as part of the larger restoration and rehabilitation project already underway. As part of the agreement for the grant award, the Library agreed to comply with all applicable regulations and procedures governing Federal grants as well as the applicable Secretary of the Interior's Standards, which were followed for the entire building as well.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties distinguishes between the definitions and standards for Preservation, Rehabilitation, and Restoration. These definitions were clearly taken into consideration when formulating the Preservation Zones described in Section 8.0. Zone 1 relates to Restoration, depicting a property at a particular period of its history; Zone 2 relates to Preservation, the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials; and Zone 3 relates to Rehabilitation, altering a property due to the changing uses, while still retaining the property's historic character.

Restoration is defined as:

The act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.⁵⁶⁶

Preservation is defined as:

The act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.⁵⁶⁷

10.0 Preservation & Maintenance Guidelines

10.1 General Guidelines

10.2 Record Keeping

10.2.1 Building Maintenance Log

10.2.2 File Records

10.2.3 Maintenance & Inspection Schedules

10.3 Inspections

10.3.1 Exterior Inspections

10.3.2 Interior Inspections

10.4 Interior Materials & Finishes of the McKim Building

10.0 Preservation and Maintenance Guidelines

10.1 GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following guidelines should be followed when undertaking any work on the building:

1. Understand the nature of both the dirt and the surface to be cleaned before proceeding with any cleaning operations. Cleaning should never be so aggressive that it results in damage to the material being cleaned.
2. Only use the mildest workable method and cleaning solution in each instance, although this may require more time or effort.
3. Refer to historical precedent regarding how the materials have been cared for before choosing a new custodial process.
4. Research and test the suitability of new products before permitting their widespread use on an historic building. Seek the experience of others before proceeding. Begin work in the less sensitive, less valuable areas of the structure.
5. In certain instances, historic building materials and finishes may be better preserved if they are allowed to remain dirtier than custodial standards would otherwise permit.
6. Always consult an architectural conservator prior to undertaking cleaning to remove specific stains or soiling.

10.2 RECORD KEEPING

10.2.1 Building Maintenance Log

The Building Maintenance Log is a record of all inspections, routine maintenance work, and repairs performed on the building, as outlined in the following sections. The Building Maintenance Log entries should be keyed to drawings as required for clarity. These drawings should be kept with the Log. The following information should be included in every maintenance record entry:

1. Materials/Finishes.
2. Date of inspection and/or maintenance work.

3. Name of the company or persons performing the work.
4. Condition of building elements.
5. Repair work done and products used.
6. Correspondence regarding work performed by outside contractors and professionals.
7. Future work needed.

Building maintenance should be based on the charts developed by Building Conservation Associates, Inc., for individual rooms in the McKim Building of the Boston Public Library. These charts list specific materials and finishes used for various elements in the room and are included in Appendix 11.13 of this report. They should be updated as needed prior to any maintenance or restoration work. A record of the documentation listed here should be kept with the Building Maintenance Log.

10.2.2 File Records

Files containing the following information should be maintained and updated:

- Relevant technical details including the products used, product data sheets, and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).
- Manufacturer's printed instructions or literature.
- All drawings, blueprints and shop drawings stored in flat files. A set of all available drawings of all work completed by an outside contractor, as well as a record of proposed future work. The drawings should be catalogued with dates of work performed or proposed, and the names of the designer and contractor.
- Warranties for materials and guarantees for work performed.
- Record of spare materials kept on site.

10.2.3 Maintenance and Inspection Schedules

A schedule of routine maintenance and inspections should be kept. The dates and locations of inspections, routine cleaning, and maintenance should be recorded on the calendar along with the record of all light-duty repairs.

A regular schedule of field inspections of all areas of the building, including all roof areas should be maintained. The location of each inspection should be indicated on drawings and areas of inspection should be photographed for documentation purposes.

Implementation of the schedules and activities identified in the following sections on inspection and maintenance will ensure that damage and deterioration of elements is noted in a timely manner and will reduce the risk of serious damage to either interior or exterior building elements.

10.3 INSPECTIONS

10.3.1 Exterior Inspections

Exterior inspections should be conducted on a regularly scheduled basis as described below. Other exterior inspections should be conducted in the late spring or early summer. During this time weather conditions permit the effects of winter storms and spring rains to be assessed with sufficient time available to conduct necessary repairs. Elements that conduct water should be examined during a rainfall. If this is not possible, a water source should be accessible in order to simulate the passage of water through these elements.

Weekly Inspections

<i>Inspect:</i>	<i>For:</i>
Front Doors/Other main entrance metalwork	Scratches, abrasions, vandalism. Loose hardware.
Other Entrances	Scratches, abrasions, vandalism. Loose hardware.
Door glass	Breakage. Soiling.
Light fixtures	Non-working light bulbs.
Wall surfaces	Graffiti, vandalism.

Monthly Inspections

<i>Inspect:</i>	<i>For:</i>
Drains and strainers	Blockages/accumulated debris.
Leaders	Blockages. Disconnections.

Quarterly Inspections

<i>Inspect:</i>	<i>For:</i>
Leaders	Blockages. Disconnections.

Semi-Annual Inspections

<i>Inspect:</i>	<i>For:</i>
Roofing System	Cracked or dislodged clay tiles. Corrosion, lifting or separation at metal seams. Bare spots, bubbles, soft spots, wrinkling, blisters, tears and holes in EPDM membrane. Alligatoring and open joints at bituminous seams.
Roof and areaway drains	Blockages and damage.
Strainers	Correct installation. Accumulated debris.
Masonry adjacent to roofing systems	Moisture, efflorescence, biological growth and eroded mortar (indicators of leaks in roofing systems).
Marble/granite copings	Cracked, damaged, or loose units. Condition of sealant.
Caulking at skylights, windows and doors	Evidence of deterioration, including pulling away from edges. Paint condition.
Glazing in skylights	Cracked units.

Annual Inspections

<i>Inspect:</i>	<i>For:</i>
Window and door hardware and moveable parts	General condition.
Windows	Paint condition. Damaged weather stripping and air leakage.
Window sealant and glazing putty	Deteriorated or missing.
Window panes	Broken glass.
All exterior surfaces	Heavy staining and soiling. Graffiti. Condition of expansion joints.
Granite	Cracks and spalls. Displacement.
Brick	Stains, cracks, spalls.
Mortar	Cracking, erosion, and losses.
Chimney	Cracks. Displacement.

Seasonal

Inspect:

For:

Gutters and drainage systems (after period of rain)	Ponding or standing water.
Drain outlets (during periods of accumulation of snow)	Snow build-up that may damage the materials and debris that may block the flow of water once the snow thaws. Make sure to remove enough surface snow to allow complete view of drain opening and strainer.

Typical Maintenance Activities

The complexity of each job needs to be evaluated in order to determine if individual tasks can be completed by in-house staff or if they require the assistance of outside maintenance or professional services. Professional services must be sought for more specific and difficult problems.

Windows:

Painting	Only minor touch-up painting can be done in-house. All other repairs require professional services.
Hardware	Repair or replace damaged or missing window hardware. Oil operable parts on a regular basis. Do not paint chains or pulleys.
Sealant and glazing putty	Large jobs or painting of all windows should include new sealant and glazing, and should be completed by an outside contractor.
Weather-stripping	Keep weather stripping clean. Replace dented sections of metal weather stripping as required. Repair or refurbish weather stripping when windows are repainted.
Glazing	Replace broken panes of glass.

Roof:

Clay tiles	Reattach loose tiles. Replace broken tiles.
Flat roofing	If inspection reveals leaks, tears, holes, deteriorated sealant, missing fasteners etc., hire an outside contractor.
Flashing	Hire a roofing contractor if problems are observed.
Roof drains	Keep drains and strainers clear of debris on a regular basis. Reinstall strainers if they are loose. Replace any missing strainers. Leaks or blockages should be repaired by a plumber. Other malfunctions of the flashing or adjacent roofing should be repaired by a roofing contractor.

	Gutters and Leaders	Clear debris from gutters on a regular basis. Verify that gutters are pitched appropriately towards drains or leaders. Clear blockages with a stream of water or a length of flexible rod. Severely clogged leaders should only be disassembled as a last resort by a roofing contractor. Minor deflections can be repaired in-house; severe deflections should be serviced by a roofing contractor.
	Ponding or standing water	Ponding or standing water and malfunctions of the flashing or adjacent roofing should be repaired by a roofing contractor.
Masonry:	General	Following an initial cleaning, masonry will require cleaning every 3–5 years. Cleaning on a regular basis will allow for the use of less aggressive cleaning methods and more expeditious results.
	Soiling	Determine cause of staining (water, copper run-off). Repair leak if possible. Evaluate need to remove stain. Low pressure (less than 100 psi) water may be sufficient to remove soiling and minor stains. An outside contractor is necessary for higher pressure water washing, chemical cleaning and stain removal. Always test for appropriate methods whether work is completed in-house or by an outside contractor.
	Graffiti	Remove graffiti within 24 hours using an outside contractor. Clean architecturally delineated sections of masonry or metal to avoid uneven cleaning.
	Spalls and cracks	The spalls should be reviewed by a masonry specialist and repairs should be made by a qualified masonry restoration contractor.
Sealant:	Cracks, drying, holes.	Cut out minor defects in sealant and install new sealant of same type. For large jobs, use outside contractor.
	Expansion joints	Inspect regularly. Repair or resealing of expansion joints should be completed by outside contractor.

10.3.2 Interior Inspections

Interior inspections should be conducted on a regularly scheduled basis. The schedule will vary based on whether or not the spaces in question are in use on a day-to-day basis and on the number of people using the space.

Interior inspections are less dependent upon seasonal changes than exterior inspections. However, any large cracks, losses, or other signs of water infiltration noted on the exterior should be investigated at the same time from the interior to determine the extent of damage to interior materials. Interior spaces should be inspected monthly for a period of six months following repairs to exterior waterproofing elements, as there is often a delay between the time damage is noted on the exterior and when signs of water damage appear on interior surfaces.

Weekly Inspections

<i>Inspect:</i>	<i>For:</i>
Marble floors and veneers	Soil, stains, scratches, abrasions.
Terrazzo floors	Soil, scratches, abrasions.
Carpet floors	Soil.
Light fixtures	Non-working light bulbs.

Monthly Inspections

<i>Inspect:</i>	<i>For:</i>
Marble floors and veneers	Soil, stains, scratches, abrasions.
Terrazzo floors	Soil, scratches, abrasions or cracks.
Ceramic tile floors	Soil, scratches, cracks. Dull finish. Loose or missing grout.
Resilient tile floors	Soil, scratches, indentations, tears. Lifting from substrate.
Carpet floors	Soil, rips or lifting at seams.
Light fixtures	Non-working light bulbs.
Doors	Loose or inoperable hardware. Soil, scratches, abrasions. Detached finishes. Broken or loose glass.

Semi-Annual Inspections

<i>Inspect:</i>	<i>For:</i>
Marble floors and veneers	Loose or missing grout. Condition of polish.
Flat plaster wall surfaces	Soil, stains. Cracks in plaster or painted finishes. Wet or crumbly surfaces. Detached finishes.
Brick wainscot	Soil, stains, abrasions. Loose or missing mortar. Efflorescence or cracks.
Painted canvas walls	Soil, stains. Detachment from substrate. Rips and tears.
Handrails	Connection to wall. Soil, scratches. Loss of finish.
Ornamental metals within reach of pedestrian traffic	Soil, scratches, vandalism. Condition of finish.
Windows	Soil. Hardware operation. Surface coating condition. Cracked, loose or missing sealant and/or glazing putty. Loose, damaged or missing weather stripping.
Wood casework	Dull, soiled or scratched finish. Damaged or missing parts.

Annual Inspections

<i>Inspect:</i>	<i>For:</i>
Flat plaster ceiling surfaces	Soil, stains. Cracks in plaster or painted finishes. Wet or crumbly surfaces. Detached finishes.
Ornamental plaster surfaces	Soil, stains. Cracks in plaster or painted finishes. Wet or crumbly surfaces. Detached finishes. Loose or detached ornament.
Hardware	Correct function. Missing elements. Loose elements. Dull, soiled, or scratched finish.
Leather upholstered doors	Soil, rips, abrasion. Detached or lifting at seams. Surface finish.

Biannual Inspections

<i>Inspect:</i>	<i>For:</i>
Flat plaster ceiling surfaces	Soil, stains. Cracks in plaster or painted finishes. Wet or crumbly surfaces. Detached finishes.
Ornamental plaster surfaces	Soil, stains. Cracks in plaster or painted finishes. Wet or crumbly surfaces. Detached finishes. Loose or detached ornament.
Light fixtures	Soil. Condition of finish.

Typical Maintenance Activities

As in the case of the building exterior, the complexity of each task needs to be evaluated in order to determine whether it can be completed by in-house staff or if the activity requires the assistance of outside maintenance and professional services.

The schedules noted here are for rooms used by the public on a daily basis. The schedule should be adjusted according to building usage.

Marble/Terrazzo floors and stairs

Daily: First dry mop with a cotton string mop head treated with a 'dust catcher.' After this procedure, damp mop with a cotton string mop rinsed in a bucket equipped with a wringer. Water should be changed frequently. Avoid mopping baseboards.

Weekly: Wet mop weekly using mild cleaning agent. Wet mopping requires two mops and three buckets. The first bucket contains the cleaning agent, such as KRC Ion 420, available from Chemique, Inc., Moorestown, NJ, 609-234-3061, in water. The second bucket contains clear water for rinsing the cleaning agent from the floor. The third bucket contains clear water to wring out the rinse water to insure that the water in the second bucket remains clean. Apply cleaning agent from first bucket and agitate on floor with the first mop. Before it dries on the floor, remove cleaning agent with clean water from the second bucket using the second mop. Rinse the second mop in the third bucket before rewetting it in the second bucket to remove more of the cleaning agent.

Monthly: Refinish/rebuff floors.

Semi-annually: Clean floors using mild detergent, such as KRC Ion 417, available from Chemique, Inc., Moorestown, NJ, (609) 234-3061, and water.

Marble veneer wall

Weekly: Wipe with damp cotton cloth.

Miscellaneous marble elements

Monthly: Clean marble surfaces with mild detergent, such as KRC Ion 417, available from Chemique, Inc., Moorestown, NJ, (609) 234-3061, and water. Clean with a 5% solution of detergent in water. Wipe on surface. Let sit for 5 minutes. Do not allow to dry on surface. Thoroughly rinse with clean water. Wipe dry.

Annually: Repolish marble. Hire outside contractor to clean heavy soil and staining.

<i>Sandstone veneer walls</i>	Biannually: Clean marble surfaces with mild detergent, such as KRC Ion 417, available from Chemique, Inc., Moorestown, NJ, (609) 234-3061, and water. Clean with a 5% solution of detergent in water. Wipe on surface. Let sit for 5 minutes. Do not allow to dry on surface. Thoroughly rinse with clean water. Wipe dry.
<i>Limestone veneer walls</i>	Biannually: Clean marble surfaces with mild detergent, such as KRC Ion 417, available from Chemique, Inc., Moorestown, NJ, (609) 234-3061, and water. Clean with a 5% solution of detergent in water. Wipe on surface. Let sit for 5 minutes. Do not allow to dry on surface. Thoroughly rinse with clean water. Wipe dry.
<i>Plaster walls</i>	Biannually: Vacuum walls with soft brush attachment. Wash heavily soiled surfaces with mild detergent and water. (Note: may not be applicable to all surfaces, based on finish chosen for use.)
<i>Decoratively painted walls</i>	Annually: To be cleaned only by conservators.
<i>Guastavino tile ceiling</i>	Annually: Wash soiled tiles with a sponge wetted in clean water and a mild detergent, such as KRC Ion 420, available from Chemique, Inc., Moorestown, NJ, 609-234-3061. Rinse with a sponge wetted in clean water.
<i>Plaster ceilings</i>	Annually: Vacuum surfaces with soft brush attachment. Wash soiled surfaces with a sponge wetted in clean water and a mild detergent, such as KRC Ion 420, available from Chemique, Inc., Moorestown, NJ, 609-234-3061. Rinse with a sponge wetted in clean water.
<i>Mosaics</i>	Weekly: Dust with damp cotton cloth. Do not allow water to remain on surfaces.
<i>Ornamental metals</i>	Weekly: Dust polished metals with damp cotton cloth. Do not allow water to remain on surfaces. Weekly: Dust oxidized metals with soft, dry cotton cloth.
<i>Cast Iron</i>	Weekly: Dust with damp cotton cloth. Do not allow water to remain on surfaces. Simple Green
<i>Woodwork</i>	Weekly: Dust with soft, dry cotton cloth.
<i>Leather upholstered doors</i>	Annually: Clean doors. Do not allow water to dry or remain on surface.
<i>Glass</i>	Weekly: Clean glass with glass cleaner and cotton cloth. Spray cleaner on cloth, not on glass, to avoid getting cleaner on metal elements.

10.4 INTERIOR MATERIALS AND FINISHES OF THE MCKIM BUILDING

Background information necessary to have a thorough understanding of the materials used to construct and embellish the McKim Building of the Boston Public Library has been provided in Appendix 11.13. It comprises of Maintenance charts for individual rooms identifying the location of both the original materials and finishes and the new materials used in the restoration work. Numbers for each room are taken from the SBRA's construction drawings.

Endnotes

ENDNOTES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

¹ Photos of the interior and exterior of the BPL Annex can be found in the 1919 BPL Trustees' Annual Report, BPL Trustees' Records, Boston Public Library and in drawer 41 of the BPL Drawings Archive.

3.0 ARCHITECTURAL CHRONOLOGY

² Walter Muir Whitehill, *Boston Public Library: A Centennial History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), 133.

³ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1893), 4.

⁴ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1896), 18.

⁵ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1897), 13.

⁶ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1897), 16.

⁷ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1899), 10.

⁸ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1907), 61.

⁹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1920), 49.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1921), 47.

¹² Ibid., 48.

¹³ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1924).

¹⁴ Ibid., 23.

¹⁵ Ibid., 24.

¹⁶ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1932).

¹⁷ Ames & Graves Addendum No. 1 to "Drawings and Specifications of the Contract for Miscellaneous Installation, Alterations & Repairs at the Central Library Building." BPL Drawings Archive, Boston Public Library, Boston, MA.

¹⁸ City of Boston Contract with Dominic A. Gentile for "Certain Painting and Painter's Work at the Central Library Building (11 December 1964); and City of Boston Contract with ABC Electrical Corp. for alterations to "Fine Arts & Science & Technology Departments, North Corridor" (8 October 1964), BPL Drawings Archive.

¹⁹ City of Boston Contract with Dominic A. Gentile for "Certain Painting," 3.

²⁰ City of Boston Contract with P.J. James Plumbing & Heating Co. for "Certain Removals & Replacements at the Central Library Building," (March 1965), BPL Drawings Archive.

²¹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1972), 6-7.

²² BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1973-74), City Document No. 15 (1975), 7.

²³ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1984-1985), 58.

4.0 SELECTION OF THE ARCHITECT AND DESIGN

²⁴ Walter Muir Whitehill, "The Making of an Architectural Masterpiece – the Boston Public Library," *American Art Journal* 2, no. 2 (Fall 1970), 13.

²⁵ Whitehill, *Centennial History*, 46-47.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 68.

²⁷ Whitehill, *Centennial History*, 133. Also excerpted in "The Book Tomb," *The Boston News* (24 November 1891), BPL Trustees' Records, Boston Public Library (hereafter cited as BPL Trustees' Records), T.R. 25.35.

²⁸ Boston Herald article, BPL Trustees' Records, T.R. 25.54, (untitled and undated).

²⁹ *Boston Transcript* (June 1886), BPL Trustees' Records, T.R. 25.54.

³⁰ Ralph Adams Cram, *My Life in Architecture* (Boston: Little Brown, 1936), 34.

³¹ "The City Architect: Reasons for Giving the Public Library Trustees Fuller Power," (January 29, 1887), BPL Trustees' Records, T.R. 25.54, No source noted on clipping.

³² BPL Trustees' Annual Report, City Document No. 40 (1888), 4, BPL Trustees' Records, T.R. 25.12.

³³ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 30 March 1887, vol. 2:122, BPL Trustees' Records.

5.0 MCKIM'S DESIGN

³⁴ "Contract with Messrs. McKim, Mead & White," Appendix C of City Document 54, *Report on the Cost of the New Library Building, Dartmouth Street* (1891), 33, BPL Trustees' Records, T.R. 15.17. Text contained in Appendix 11.4.1.

³⁵ Charles Moore, *The Life and Times of Charles Follen McKim* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1929), 63.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 66. Moore states that McKim, himself, said, "The Bates Hall windows shall have the same simple, direct character as the arches in the Colosseum."

³⁷ Leland Martin Roth, *McKim Mead & White Architects* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), 119.

³⁸ Richard Guy Wilson, *McKim, Mead & White Architects* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), 134-137.

³⁹ William Jordy, "The Beaux-Arts Renaissance: Charles McKim's Boston Public Library," in Vol. 3 of *American Buildings and Their Architects: Progressive and Academic Ideals at the Turn of the Century* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1972), 333-334.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 370.

⁴¹ “Stenographic Report of the Statements Made to the Committee on Library Department by S. A. B. Abbott and Charles F. McKim,” Appendix A of City Document 54, 20-21. Text contained in Appendix 11.7 of this report.

⁴² Moore, 66.

⁴³ Richard Guy Wilson, letter to author, July 1997.

⁴⁴ Jordy, 335-336.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 359.

⁴⁶ City Document 54, Appendix, 8.

⁴⁷ “The Book Tomb,” *The Boston News* (24 November 1891), BPL Trustees’ Records, 25.35.

⁴⁸ BPL Trustees’ Minutes, 23 July 1888, vol. 2:204.

6.0 LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION

⁴⁹ “Laying of the Cornerstone” Program, BPL Trustees’ Records, T.R. 25.4.

⁵⁰ *Boston Post* (November 29, 1888), BPL Trustees’ Records, T.R. 25.4.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ BPL Trustees’ Minutes, 25 October 1892, vol. 3:382.

⁵⁴ *The Boston Public Library* (Boston: Boston Public Library Employees Benefit Association, 1916), xvii.

⁵⁵ Frederick Hill, *Charles F. McKim: The Man* (New Hampshire: Marshall Jones Company, 1950), 29-31.

⁵⁶ City Document 54, 14.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 22-23.

⁵⁹ “Public Library Octopus. That Huge Mass Into Which Millions of Dollars Have Been Poured, And Which, Without Ceasing, Demands More,” *The Boston News* (23 November 1891), BPL Trustees’ Records, T.R. 25.35.

⁶⁰ “Faulty Granite. Government Tests on the Public Library Stone. The Result Shows Worst Fears of Poor Work Realized,” *The Boston News* (3 December 1891), BPL Trustees’ Records, T.R. 25.35.

⁶¹ Whitehill, *Centennial History*, 153.

⁶² “Faulty Granite.”

⁶³ “The Boston Public Library Building: An Abstract of the Controversy,” *The Library Journal* (October 1990), 297.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 298.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 299.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Soule, C. C. "The Boston Public Library: How to Build a Library," *The Library Journal* 17 (April 1892), 124-125.

²⁰ McKim, Mead & White, *Contract and Specifications for Work to be Done and Material to be Furnished in the Continuation of the Erection of the New Public Library Building on Copley Square* (June 1889), 14, McKim, Mead & White Manuscript Collection, New York Historical Society, New York, NY. (hereafter cited as *Contract and Specifications for Continuation* and McKim, Mead & White MSS).

²¹ *Contract and Specifications for Stone and Marblework of Entrance Hall and Staircase in the New Public Library on Copley Square* (August 1889), 14, McKim, Mead & White MSS.

²² BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1891), 19.

7.0 ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF THE BUILDING: 1895 TO 1972

²³ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1899), 10.

²⁴ Whitehill, *Centennial History*, 188.

²⁵ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1904).

²⁶ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1921).

²⁷ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1919), 2.

²⁸ Whitehill, *Centennial History*, 219.

²⁹ M. G. Van Rensselaer, "The New Public Library in Boston: Its Artistic Aspects," *Century Magazine* 50 (June 1895), 261.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ *Contract and Specifications for the New Public Library Building on Copley Square up to Bates Hall Floor* (June 1889), 11. (Hereafter cited as *Contract and Specifications up to Bates Hall Floor*.)

³² Ibid., 13.

³³ Ibid., 13-14.

³⁴ Ibid., 15.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Copies of the St. Gaudens sculptures are located at the Freer Gallery in Washington D.C. and at his home in Cornish, New Hampshire.

³⁷ Herbert Small, comp., *Handbook of the Boston Public Library* (Boston: Curtis & Company, 1895), 50-51.

³⁸ Whitehill, *Centennial History*, 159.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 157.

⁹¹ *Contract and Specifications for Continuation*, 19.

⁹² Ibid., 16.

⁹³ Ibid., 24.

⁹⁴ Small, (1895), 30.

⁹⁵ *Contract and Specifications for Continuation*, 29.

⁹⁶ C. Howard Walker, "The Boston Public Library," *New England Magazine* 12 (May 1895), 261.

⁹⁷ *Contract and Specifications for Brick and Stone Work*.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ "Lamps at Dartmouth Street Entrance," BPL Print Collection, Figure E-44 of this report.

¹⁰⁰ Herbert J. Small, comp. *Handbook of the New Public Library in Boston* (Curtis & Cameron, 1908). Copley Prints advertisement contained in front matter.

¹⁰¹ Small (1895), 15-16.

¹⁰² *Contract and Specifications for Carpenter Work in the New Public Library Building on Copley Square* (August 1892, Revised October 18, 1892), 15, McKim, Mead & White MSS.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 13.

¹⁰⁴ Elmer Ellsworth Garnsey, "The Boston Public Library," *The Peterson Magazine* 4, no. 5 (November 1894), 1015.

¹⁰⁵ *Contract and Specifications for Roof Work in the New Public Library Building on Copley Square* (1890), 10-11, McKim, Mead & White MSS.

¹⁰⁶ Small (1895), 5.

¹⁰⁷ *Contract and Specifications for Roof Work*, 12.

¹⁰⁸ *Contract and Specifications for Brick and Stone Work*.

¹⁰⁹ *Contract and Specifications for Roof Work*, 12-13.

¹¹⁰ *Contract and Specifications for Continuation*, 20.

¹¹¹ "It Opens Today: Public Library at Last is the People's," *The Boston Daily Globe* (1 February 1895), BPL Trustees' Records, T.R. 25.38.

¹¹² Van Rensselaer, 262.

¹¹³ Jordy, 370.

¹¹⁴ *Contract and Specifications up to Bates Hall Floor*, 15-16.

¹¹⁵ *Contract and Specifications for Continuation*, 16.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 19-20.

¹¹⁷ *Contract and Specifications for Roof Work*, 11.

¹¹⁷ Garnsey, 1023.

¹¹⁸ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1897), 13.

¹¹⁹ Small (1895), 26.

¹²⁰ *Contract and Specifications for Carpenter Work*, 16.

¹²¹ *Contract and Specifications for Continuation* (June 1889), 24.

¹²² Small (1895), 27.

¹²³ Whitehill, *Centennial History*, 176-177.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 177

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 178-179.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 179.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 179, quoting from Thomas Russell Sullivan's journal.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 180.

¹²⁹ McKim to MacMonnies, 27 October 1897, MMW MSS. M-9.

¹³⁰ Correspondence with author, 18 August 1998.

¹³¹ Jonathan Fairbanks, "MacMonnies' Bacchante: Its Trial, Condemnation and Restoration," *Sculpture Review* 17, no. 2 (1993), 31.

¹³² Small (1895), 26.

¹³³ Olmsted to McKim, 14 June 1892, MMW MSS, M9.

¹³⁴ Small (1895), 26.

¹³⁵ *Monograph of the Works of McKim Mead & White 1879-1915*. 4 vols. 1915. Reprint (4vols. In 1), Plate 103. Reproductions of these plans can be found in Appendix 11.3.

¹³⁶ Small (1895), 26.

¹³⁷ M. Sargent to Olmsted Brothers, 17 December 1898, Olmsted Archives, Brookline, Massachusetts.

¹³⁸ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1897), 13; (1900), 8; (1904); (1906).

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, (1907), 12.

¹⁴⁰ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 2 December 1904, vol. 8:378

¹⁴¹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report, (1907), 12.

¹⁴² BPL Trustees' Minutes, 29 May 1903, vol. 7:308-309.

¹⁴³ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1929), 17.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, (1971), 7.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, (1903).

- ¹⁴¹ Gilbert Small & Co., "Repairs to Windows and Certain Doors Including Painting," (November 16, 1964), BPL 35.
- ¹⁴² Whitehill, *Centennial History*, 192.
- ¹⁴³ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1912); (1913); (1915); (1916); (1920-21), 49. The mayor's approval of Farquhar to do work is recorded in the BPL Trustees' Minutes, 7 May 1920, vol. 11:294; (1924). 23; (1925); (1926), 49; (1927), 60; (1928).
- ¹⁴⁴ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1937), 38. Also see J.R. Worcester, "Alterations to Roof Trusses," (13 September 1937, 1 June 1942), BPL 14.
- ¹⁴⁵ J.R. Worcester, Untitled set of 3 drawings of Roof Plans and Details (6 July 1942), BPL 14.
- ¹⁴⁶ Gilbert Small & Co., "Repairs to Arcade Roof," set of 2 drawings (27 July 1951), BPL 33.
- ¹⁴⁷ Gilbert Small & Co., "BPL Tile Restoration Contract," set of 4 drawings (10 February 1955, Rev. 21 December 1955), BPL 14.
- ¹⁴⁸ Ibid., (12 April 1956), BPL 14.
- ¹⁴⁹ Gilbert Small & Co., "Repairs to Arcade Roof," (26 May 1956), BPL 33.
- ¹⁵⁰ Fox & Gale, "Repairing Portions of Main Tile Roof: Plan of Roof," (August 1933), BPL 14.
- ¹⁵¹ Gilbert Small & Co., "BPL Tile Restoration Contract."
- ¹⁵² BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1927).
- ¹⁵³ Fox & Gale, "Reconstruction of Fountain Basin," undated, BPL 33.
- ¹⁵⁴ BPL 33.
- ¹⁵⁵ H.L.S., "A Wonderful Structure: Boston Public Library Finest in the World," *The Newton Circuit* (1 February 1895).
- ¹⁵⁶ David McCord, ... *as built with second thoughts, reforming what was old!* (Boston: The Centennial Commission of the Boston Public Library, 1953), 8.
- ¹⁵⁷ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 16 August 1889, vol. 2:338.
- ¹⁵⁸ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 21 January 1890, vol. 2:398.
- ¹⁵⁹ T. R. Sullivan, "The New Building of the Boston Public Library," *Scribner's Magazine* 19 (January 1896), 84.
- ¹⁶⁰ H.L.S., "A Wonderful Structure."
- ¹⁶¹ Jordy, 352.
- ¹⁶² BPL Trustees' Minutes, 5 September 1894, vol. 4:268 and BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1898).
- ¹⁶³ Photographs of these light standards in the Entry Hall can be found in the following sources: H.L.S., "A Wonderful Structure: Boston Public Library Finest in the World," *The Newton Circuit* (1 February 1895); Van Rensselaer, 264; and Walker, 262.
- ¹⁶⁴ Herbert J. Small, comp., *Handbook of the New Public Library in Boston* (Boston: Curtis & Cameron, 1899), 16.
- ¹⁶⁵ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1900-1901), 8.

¹⁷¹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1909).

¹⁷² *The Boston Public Library*, 4th ed., rev. Frank H. Chase, Ph.D. (Boston: Boston Public Library Employees Benefit Association, 1921), 6.

¹⁷³ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1929), 18.

¹⁷⁴ Whitehill, *Centennial History*, 215.

¹⁷⁵ Milton E. Lord, "Boston Modernizes—Plans for Enlargement," *The Library Journal* 78 (December 15, 1953), 2126.

¹⁷⁶ A photograph of this arrangement can be found in Peter A. Wick, prep. *A Handbook to the Art and Architecture of the Boston Public Library* (Boston: The Associates of the Boston Public Library, 1978), 24.

¹⁷⁷ Ames, Child & Graves, Untitled set of 5 drawings (24 November 1951), BPL 23 and set of 1964 plans provided by SBRA.

¹⁷⁸ Lord, 2126.

¹⁷⁹ Jordy, 362.

¹⁸⁰ McKim, Mead & White, "Periodical Room," no. 519, (28 April 1892), BPL 23.

¹⁸¹ Small (1908), 16.

¹⁸² Plans of McKim's early designs for the Library are found in *Monograph of the Works of McKim Mead & White 1879-1915*. Reproductions of these plans can be found in Appendix 11.3.

¹⁸³ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1907), 12; (1909).

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, (1927), 60; (1929); (1933), 19.

¹⁸⁵ Lord, 2129.

¹⁸⁶ City of Boston Contract w/ Dominic A. Gentile for "Certain Painting and Painter's Work at the Central Library Building" (Dec. 11, 1964). Found in the BPL Drawings Archive.

¹⁸⁷ This room label is found on the plans published in the *Monograph*.

¹⁸⁸ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1898), 20 and (1906).

¹⁸⁹ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1898), 14.

¹⁹⁰ Stull Associates, Inc., *A Restoration Program for the McKim Building of the Boston Public Library* (August 1981), 4.

¹⁹¹ Small (1895), 50-51.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ Small (1908), 55.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ Jenney & Fox, "Drawing for a New Patent Library," no. 4 (1902), BPL 29.

¹⁹⁷ Small (1895), 20.

¹⁸⁸ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1920); (1924), 24; (1930), 27.

¹⁸⁹ Lord, 2127.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid. and see also "Plan of Basement" no. E, (January 1959), BPL 5.

¹⁹¹ McCord, 29.

¹⁹² Lord, 2128.

¹⁹³ Ames, Child & Graves, "Alterations to Catalog Room" set of 6 drawings (July 1949), BPL 23.

¹⁹⁴ A photograph of the Open Shelf Department showing the charge desk can be found in Lord, 2127.

¹⁹⁵ Ames, Child & Graves, "Alterations to Catalog Room."

¹⁹⁶ Ames & Graves Addendum No. 1 to "Drawings and Specifications of the Contract for Miscellaneous Installation, Alterations, & Repairs at the Central Library Building," 3.

¹⁹⁷ Lord, 2127.

¹⁹⁸ McKim, Mead & White, "Service Department on South Side of Ground Floor," no. 517 (25 April 1892), BPL 23 and NYHS 357B2.

¹⁹⁹ McCord, 28.

²⁰⁰ Ames, Child & Graves, "Alterations for a Children's Section of New Open Shelf Department," set of 4 drawings (31 August 1951), BPL 23.

²⁰¹ McCord, 28.

²⁰² Hill, 30.

²⁰³ Batterson, See, and Eisele to McKim, 2 June 1894, Boston Public Library Papers, Ms.Acc.1065, Boston Public Library, Boston (hereafter referred to as BPL Papers).

²⁰⁴ Whitehill, "Making of an Architectural Masterpiece," 26.

²⁰⁵ "It Opens Today: Public Library at Last is the People's," *The Boston Daily Globe* (1 February 1895), BPL Trustees' Records, T.R. 25.38.

²⁰⁶ Hill, 31.

²⁰⁷ Jordy, 352.

²⁰⁸ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 15 January 1897, vol. 5:260.

²⁰⁹ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports, 1891 and Louis St. Gaudens to McKim, 15 September 1889, BPL Papers, Ms Acc.1089.

²¹⁰ In McKim to John C. Ropes, 27 August 1894, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 103, McKim states "If they cannot see their way clear to raising the necessary amount, Mr. St. Gaudens and myself have agreed to assume the additional expense."

²¹¹ Ibid. McKim quotes Sargent in his letter to Ropes.

²¹² McKim to Augustus St. Gaudens, 8 September 1894, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 103.

²¹³ John C. Ropes to McKim, 30 August 1894, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 103.

²²⁴ Walker, 263.

²²⁵ Jordy, 352.

²²⁶ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 6 February 1903, vol. 7:258.

²²⁷ *The Boston Public Library* (1921), 10.

²²⁸ Rambusch Decorating Company, "Maintenance of the Large Luminaire," (May 23, 1952), BPL 35.

²²⁹ *The Boston Public Library* (1916), 19.

²³⁰ Jordy, 356-357.

²³¹ Teri Hesnick, Kate Olivier and Gianfranco Pocobene, "Puvis De Chavannes's Allegorical Murals in the Boston Public Library: History, Technique, and Conservation," *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation* 36 (1997), 60. Mr. Koos was referred to in letters found regarding the murals, but no other information about him has been found.

²³² G. E. Wolters to McKim, 12 October 1895, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 101.

²³³ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 15 October 1895, vol. 5: 6.

²³⁴ Frederick P. Hill to McKim, 15 December 1896, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 102.

²³⁵ Garnsey to McKim, 16 December 1896, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 101

²³⁶ BPL Trustees' Minutes, January 15, 1897, vol. 5:260.

²³⁷ BPL Trustees' Minutes, May 25, 1893, vol. 4:69.

²³⁸ Small (1895), 27.

²³⁹ Walker, 264.

²⁴⁰ Small (1908), 28.

²⁴¹ G.E. Wolters to McKim, 4 December 1895, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 101.

²⁴² Wick, 32.

²⁴³ These descriptions were paraphrased from descriptions in Small's 1908 *Handbook*, pages 29-34.

²⁴⁴ Wick, 32.

²⁴⁵ Whitehill, "Making of an Architectural Masterpiece," 26.

²⁴⁶ Jordy, 365.

²⁴⁷ Hesnick et al., 68.

²⁴⁸ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1933), 18.

²⁴⁹ Hesnick et al., 68.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ For more detailed information see Hesnick et al. and "Boston Public Library Treatment Proposals for Conservation of the Mural Paintings" (Center for Conservation and Technical Studies, Harvard University Art Museums, 1986), contained in Appendix 11.9.

²⁷² *A Casual Tour: Boston Public Library* (Boston: City Printing Section, 1972), 4.

²⁷³ Small (1895), 34-35.

²⁷⁴ Wilson, 137.

²⁷⁵ Small (1895), 3.

²⁷⁶ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 16 February 1894, vol. 4:198.

²⁷⁷ Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. "Boston Public Library: Paint Study" (January 1995), 9. Contained in Appendix 11.9. Hereafter referred to as SPNEA, "Paint Study."

²⁷⁸ Small (1895), 30-31.

²⁷⁹ John LaFarge to McKim, 7 February 1889, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 101.

²⁸⁰ McKim to LaFarge, 20 June 1892, The Papers of Charles McKim, Reel 1:184, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (From McKim's Letterbooks Vol. 1.)

²⁸¹ Abbott Thayer to McKim, December 7 (probably 1894), McKim, Mead & White MSS, 103.

²⁸² Thayer, Abbott Handerson, "Minerva in Chariot," ca. 1984, 38 1/8" x 53 3/4", National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Gift of John Gellatly, 1929.6.121. Information supplied by Richard Murray, Curator.

²⁸³ Thayer to McKim, June 24 (probably 1895), McKim, Mead & White MSS, 103.

²⁸⁴ Thayer to McKim, July 6 (probably 1895), McKim, Mead & White MSS, 103.

²⁸⁵ McKim to Thayer, 10 July 1895, The Papers of Charles McKim, Reel 2:235. (From McKim's Letterbooks Vol. 4)

²⁸⁶ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 19 March 1895, vol. 4:341.

²⁸⁷ McKim to Richards, 3 April 1895, The Papers of Charles McKim, Reel 2:000632.

²⁸⁸ Wm. R. Richards to McKim, 4 April 1895, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 102.

²⁸⁹ J. McNeil Whistler to The Directors and Trustees of the Boston Library, 7 May 1895, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 103.

²⁹⁰ Whitehill, "Making of an Architectural Masterpiece," 24.

²⁹¹ Thayer to McKim, 12 October 1895, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 103.

²⁹² BPL Trustees' Minutes, 10 December 1915, vol. 10:321.

²⁹³ SPNEA, "Paint Study" (January 1995), 9.

²⁹⁴ Small (1895), 32.

²⁹⁵ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 5 September 1894, vol. 4:268.

²⁹⁶ SPNEA, "Paint Study" (January 1995), 10.

²⁹⁷ Small (1895), 28

²⁹⁸ Garnsey, 1019.

²⁷⁹ SPNEA, "Paint Study" (January 1995) 7.

²⁸⁰ Small (1895), 30.

²⁸¹ SPNEA, "Paint Study" (January 1995), 10.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Small (1895), 28.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 32.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 34.

²⁸⁶ McKim, Mead & White, "Bookcases in Bates Hall," no. 644, n.d., BPL 11.

²⁸⁷ Small (1895), 32.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 33.

²⁸⁹ G.E. Wolters to McKim, 30 March 1894, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 103.

²⁹⁰ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 20 September 1901, vol. 7:61.

²⁹¹ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 14 December 1900, vol. 6:418.

²⁹² BPL Trustees' Minutes, 18 January 1901, vol. 6:431.

²⁹³ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 15 November 1901, vol. 7:83.

²⁹⁴ Fox & Gale, "Certain Renovations of Bates Hall," set of 2 drawings, Commission 320G (May 1931, some revised June 1931); "Full Scale Detail of Rack for Return Slips, Bates Hall Desk," (November 1931); "Certain Furniture in Bates Hall," Commission 320H (June 1931), BPL 11 and City of Boston Library Department, "Certain Renovations of Bates Hall," (1931), BPL Drawing Archive. (Specifications)

²⁹⁵ Fox & Gale, "Certain Renovations of Bates Hall," no. 1, Commission 320G (May 1931), BPL 11.

²⁹⁶ Fox & Gale, "Certain Furniture in Bates Hall," no. 2, Commission 320H (June 1931), BPL 11.

²⁹⁷ City of Boston Library Department, Contract for Decorative Painters' Work in Bates Hall (1931), BPL Drawing Archive.

²⁹⁸ Ames, Child & Graves, "Typical Cross Section-Full Size, Lighting Fixture in Bates Hall," nos. 189-93 (21 April 1947), BPL 39.

²⁹⁹ Lord, 2129.

³⁰⁰ Ames & Graves, "Alterations and Repairs to Bates Hall," set of 8 drawings, Job no. 897 (3 July 1958), BPL 11.

³⁰¹ Ames & Graves Architects, Specifications for Alterations and Repairs to Bates Hall Central Library Building, Boston Public Library, 3 July 1958.

³⁰² Ames & Graves, "Miscellaneous Installations, Alterations & Repairs," set of 6 drawings, Job no. 904 (26 November 1962), BPL 11.

³⁰³ Jordy, 363.

³⁰⁴ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 31 October 1893, vol. 4:134.

³⁰⁶ Small (1895), 35.

³⁰⁷ Jordy, 363.

³⁰⁸ G.E. Wolters to McKim, 21 February 1895, McKim, Mead & White MSS.

³⁰⁹ Small (1895), 35.

³¹⁰ Ibid., 36.

³¹¹ Walker, 267.

³¹² Small (1895), 36.

³¹³ "Location of Painted & Relief Work in Ceiling Decoration of the Delivery Room," BPL 25.

³¹⁴ Small (1895), 36.

³¹⁵ Jordy, 363.

³¹⁶ Other than the photograph included in the report from the BPL Print Collection, another view can be found in Walker, 267.

³¹⁷ Small (1895), 43. Also note that the main card catalogue was located in the south end of Bates Hall.

³¹⁸ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 14 May 1895, vol. 4:378.

³¹⁹ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 23 April 1895, vol. 4:363.

³²⁰ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 6 May 1895, vol. 4:373.

³²¹ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 14 May 1895, vol. 4:379.

³²² McKim's drawing of this table, "Table and Platform in Waiting Room," no. 938, is located in the McKim, Mead & White MSS, Tube 355A.

³²³ Whitehill, "Making of an Architectural Masterpiece," 19.

³²⁴ McKim to Abbott, 9 May 1890, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B9.

³²⁵ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 17 February 1893, vol. 4:47.

³²⁶ BPL Papers, MsAm. 565-566.

³²⁷ *The Boston Public Library* (1916), 23-24. Regarding the reference to Tennyson: Tennyson recounted the tale of King Arthur in *Idylls of the King*, which Small says "has, more than anything else revived interest in the Arthurian legend." From Small (1908), 42.

³²⁸ Small (1908), 42

³²⁹ Walker, 267-268.

³³⁰ Sullivan, 86-89.

³³¹ Small (1895), 47.

³³² BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1914-15), 13.

³³³ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1898).

³³⁴ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1901), 7 and BPL Trustees' Minutes, 21 March 1902, vol. 7:142.

- ³³⁴ Small (1908), 41.
- ³³⁵ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 24 January 1902, vol. 7:119.
- ³³⁶ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 21 March 1902, vol. 7:142.
- ³³⁷ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1924-25), 30.
- ³³⁸ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1924-25), 22; (1926), 30; (1928).
- ³³⁹ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 18 May 1923, vol. 12:2-3.
- ³⁴⁰ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1928).
- ³⁴¹ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1932); (1933), 18.
- ³⁴² Whitehill, "Making of an Architectural Masterpiece," 29.
- ³⁴³ Fox & Gale, "Delivery Room Set," set of 2 drawings (February 1932) and "Proposed Bookcase, etc. in Delivery Room," (September 1933), BPL 25.
- ³⁴⁴ Fox & Gale, "Oak Railing in Issue Room," (20 October 1934), BPL 25.
- ³⁴⁵ The railing no longer exists in Ames & Graves, "Public Catalogue in Abbey Room: Plan—Abbey Room Level," no. A3 (20 June 1961), BPL 25.
- ³⁴⁶ Ames, Child & Graves, "New Electric Lighting System: Abbey Room," (4 December 1947), BPL 25.
- ³⁴⁷ Ames, Child & Graves, "New Bookcase in Abbey Room," (22 June 1948), BPL 25.
- ³⁴⁸ Ames, Child & Graves, "Public Catalogue in Abbey Room" (15 April 1953), BPL 25.
- ³⁴⁹ Lord, 2129.
- ³⁵⁰ Ames & Graves, "New Book Conveyor," set of 4 drawings, (28 September 1960), BPL 37 and Jordy, 396, footnote #48.
- ³⁵¹ Jordy, 362.
- ³⁵² Ibid.
- ³⁵³ Ames, Child & Graves, "Public Catalogue in Abbey Room: Details of Light Fixtures," no. A-11, Job 898 (20 June 1961), BPL 25.
- ³⁵⁴ Perfection Glass Co., "New doors to Bates Hall," (25 January 1963), BPL 25.
- ³⁵⁵ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1974-75), 13; and (1975-76), 22.
- ³⁵⁶ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 9 January 1925, vol. 12:71.
- ³⁵⁷ Photo can be found in Wick on page 42.
- ³⁵⁸ Ames & Graves, "Public Catalogue in Abbey Room," nos. A-10 and A-13 (20 June 1961 and 7 September 1961), BPL 25.
- ³⁵⁹ Small (1895), 44.
- ³⁶⁰ Ames & Graves, "Public Catalogue in Abbey Room," no. A-5 (20 June 1961), BPL 25.
- ³⁶¹ *Casual Tour*, 4.

³¹² BPL Trustees' Minutes, 18 July 1893, vol. 9:315.

³¹³ Small (1895), 44 and Whitehill, "Making of an Architectural Masterpiece," 24.

³¹⁴ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 29 May, 14 August 1894, vol. 4:237, 264.

³¹⁵ Receipt, 3 June 1887, BPL Papers, MsBosLi. B1.

³¹⁶ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 8 January 1895, vol. 4:311 and 17 April 1896, vol. 5:123.

³¹⁷ Whitehill, "Making of an Architectural Masterpiece," 24.

³¹⁸ McKim, Mead & White, "Trustees Ante Room," no. 525 (February 1892), BPL 28.

³¹⁹ "Boston Public Library Treatment Proposals for Conservation of the Mural Paintings" (Center for Conservation and Technical Studies, Harvard University Art Museums, 1986).

³²⁰ Small (1898), 48.

³²¹ It is possible that these two rooms were painted at the same time. The first drawings of the Trustees' Lobby are dated 1898 which is the same year these changes in the Librarian's office were made.

³²² Small (1895), 48.

³²³ "It Opens Today: Public Library at Last is the People's," *The Boston Daily Globe* (February 1, 1895).

³²⁴ Walker, 268 and Wadlin, Horace G., *The Public Library in the City of Boston*, (Boston: Boston Public Library, 1911), 150.

³²⁵ Sullivan, 92.

³²⁶ Small (1895), 48.

³²⁷ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1897), 14; (1898), 16.

³²⁸ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1911).

³²⁹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1913).

³³⁰ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1927), 31.

³³¹ The plans contained in the 1908 BPL Handbook still show both spiral staircases leading to the gallery.

³³² BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1924-25), 24.

³³³ These changes are illustrated on an Untitled set of January 1959 plans, BPL 5.

³³⁴ Lord, 2127.

³³⁵ Contract w/ Dominic A. Gentile for "Certain Painting," Section 5.

³³⁶ *Casual Tour*, 5.

³³⁷ Small (1895), 50.

³³⁸ Lindsay Swift, "The New Public Library in Boston: Its Ideals and Working Conditions," *Century Magazine* 50 (June 1895), 267 & 269-70.

³³⁹ Small (1895), 49.

³⁴⁰ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 30 June 1893, vol. 4:85.

- ³⁹¹ Description taken from illustration contained in "It Opens Today: Public Library at Last is the People's," *The Boston Daily Globe* (1 February 1895), contained in Appendix 11.6.
- ³⁹² BPL Trustees' Minutes, 24 April 1891, vol. 3:134.
- ³⁹³ Dr. Harold Williams to Mr. Prince, 23 April 1891, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B14, no. 2.
- ³⁹⁴ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 15 September 1893, vol. 4:107.
- ³⁹⁵ Whitehill, "Making of an Architectural Masterpiece," 21.
- ³⁹⁶ Small (1895), 54.
- ³⁹⁷ Elliott to James Whitney, Librarian, 7 February 1901, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B14, no. 4.
- ³⁹⁸ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 29 March 1901, vol. 7:13.
- ³⁹⁹ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 6 December 1901, vol. 7:93.
- ⁴⁰⁰ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 13 December 1901, vol. 7:95.
- ⁴⁰¹ *The Boston Public Library* (1916), 34.
- ⁴⁰² McKim to Thomas A. Fox, 26 June 1899, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B14, no. 2.
- ⁴⁰³ Harold Williams to Dr. H.P. Bowditch, 29 July 1899, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B14, no. 2.
- ⁴⁰⁴ Abbott to Bowditch, 23 March 1900, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B14, no. 3.
- ⁴⁰⁵ Bowditch to Williams, 28 April 1900 and James L. Whitney to Fox, 24 November 1900, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B14, no. 3.
- ⁴⁰⁶ *The Boston Public Library* (1921), 33.
- ⁴⁰⁷ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1927), 60; and (1929).
- ⁴⁰⁸ Lord, 2129.
- ⁴⁰⁹ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1968), 8; and (1974-75), 13.
- ⁴¹⁰ Wadlin, 143.
- ⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 142.
- ⁴¹² Small (1895), 50 and BPL Trustees' Minutes, 30 June 1893, vol. 4:85.
- ⁴¹³ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 1 May 1896, vol. 5:129.
- ⁴¹⁴ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1896), 18.
- ⁴¹⁵ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1897), 13.
- ⁴¹⁶ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1898), 16.
- ⁴¹⁷ Wadlin, 101.
- ⁴¹⁸ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 23 February 1900, vol. 6:309.
- ⁴¹⁹ Small (1908), 54.

⁴⁰ McKim, Mead & White, "Plan of Lecture Room," no. 496; "Lecture Hall: Elevation towards Boylston St.," no. 497; "Lecture Hall: Elevation towards stage, entrance and court," no. 498, n.d., McKim, Mead & White MSS, Tube 357B2.

⁴¹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1921), 48.

⁴² BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1924).

⁴³ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1926), 50.

⁴⁴ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1928).

⁴⁵ Ames, Child & Graves, "New Fire Escape from Lecture Hall," 21 July 1947, BPL 19, 21.

⁴⁶ Lord, 2129.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 2130.

⁴⁸ Ames, Child & Graves, "Preliminary Studies of Alterations to Lecture Hall: Plan of New Mezzanine Floor above Lecture Hall," 22 January 1953, BPL 28.

⁴⁹ Small (1908), 55.

⁵⁰ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 16 June 1898, vol. 6:54 and Jenney & Fox, "Plan to Enlarge Gallery of Newspaper Files, Plan of Patent Library," n.d., BPL 29.

⁵¹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1903).

⁵² BPL Trustees' Minutes, 27 March 1903, vol. 7:277.

⁵³ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1925). These lights are also shown in Fox & Gale, "West Staircase & Adjoining Rooms," October 1934, BPL 29.

⁵⁴ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1926), 30.

⁵⁵ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1929) and (1931),

⁵⁶ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1932).

⁵⁷ McKim to Abbott, 9 May 1890, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B9.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ From contents of LaFarge to McKim, 8 March 1894, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 101.

⁶⁰ Contract between BPL and John Singer Sargent, 18 January 1893, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18a, no. 1 and Ms.Bos.Li.B18c. Later contract dated 5 December 1894 also in Ms.Bos.Li.B18c.

⁶¹ Sargent relates this title in an undated letter to Herbert Putnam found in the BPL Papers, Ms. 1320.2. Sargent's Argument for Decoration was found in McKim, Mead & White MSS, 103.

⁶² Sargent to McKim, 25 March 1892, McKim, Mead & White MSS, 103.

⁶³ Small (1895), 62.

⁶⁴ "Mr. J.S. Sargent's Mural Decoration for the Boston Public Library, from the Academy," *Gazette* (4 May 1894), BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18a no. 1.

⁶⁵ Walker, 268.

⁴⁴ⁱ BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18a, no. 3–30 April 1895—Resolved. Trustees decision to allow Sargent to carry out his design for the decoration of the wall space over the staircase which will connect and bring into one scheme the decoration of the two ends of the hall, but they have no funds at this time; Edward Robinson to Trustees, 27 June 1895—states that the funds have been raised by public subscription for the rest of the painting; 5 December 1895, Agreement between John S. Sargent and E.W. Hooper, A. Hemenway, S. D. Warren.

^{44r} Russell Sturgis, “Sargent’s New Wall Painting,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 34 (December 1903), 766.

^{44s} Small (1895), 54-60.

^{44t} Ibid., 53-55.

^{44u} Quoted from Fenollosa in Whitehill, “The Making of an Architectural Masterpiece,” 32.

^{44v} BPL Trustees’ Minutes, 6 November 1896, vol. 5:217 and 3 August 1896, vol. 5:174.

^{44w} Sturgis, 765.

^{44x} Small (1908), 66.

^{44y} Sturgis, 766.

^{44z} Small (1908), 70.

^{45a} Sturgis, 766.

^{45b} Sargent to Benton, 8 October 1915, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18a, no. 8.

^{45c} “Details of Bookcases, Sargent Gallery,” BPL 40.

^{45d} McKim, Mead & White, “Hall on Special Library Floor (Sargent Gallery),” no. 530 (14 April 1892), BPL 40.

^{45e} *The Boston Public Library* (1916), 41.

^{45f} Sargent to Fox & Gale Architects, 29 Dec 1913, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18a, no. 6 and Sargent to Benton, 15 Oct 1915, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18a, no. 8.

^{45g} Sargent to Benton, 15 October 1915, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18a, no. 8. This letter also contains original sketches included by Sargent to illustrate his proposed decoration.

^{45h} Sargent to J.H. Benton, 29 April 1914, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18a, no. 7.

⁴⁵ⁱ Robinson to Trustees, 22 May 1914, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18a, no. 7.

^{45j} More information regarding this time period and Sargent’s interaction with the Trustees can be found in BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18a.

^{45k} BPL Trustees’ Annual Report (1916).

^{45l} *The Boston Public Library* (1916), 39.

^{45m} Ibid., 62, 67.

⁴⁵ⁿ For a detailed description of these paintings see *The Boston Public Library* (1916), 77-90.

^{45o} *The Boston Public Library* (1916), 91.

^{45p} Ibid., 40-42.

⁴⁷² Press Announcement, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18b, no. 1.

⁴⁷³ Wick, 51.

⁴⁷⁴ Central Conference of American Rabbis to William F. Kenney, November 1919, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18b, no. 1.

⁴⁷⁵ Arthur D. Hill, City of Boston Law Department to William F. Kenney, 12 April 1920, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18b, no. 1.

⁴⁷⁶ *The Boston Public Library* (1921), 37.

⁴⁷⁷ BPL Trustees' Minutes, 29 February 1924, vol. 12:39.

⁴⁷⁸ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1933), 18.

⁴⁷⁹ Amy Guest to His Honor the Mayor of Boston, n.d., BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18b, no. 4.

⁴⁸⁰ Asst. Dir. and CEO to Mayor John B. Hynes, 13 August 1952, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18b, no. 4.

⁴⁸¹ R.H. Ives Gamnull to Hon. John B. Hynes, Mayor, 11 August 1953, BPL Papers, Ms.Bos.Li.B18b, no. 4.

⁴⁸² BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1983-84), 58.

⁴⁸³ Small (1895).

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid., 63.

⁴⁸⁵ Garnsey, 1021.

⁴⁸⁶ Small (1899), 65.

⁴⁸⁷ Small (1895), 62.

⁴⁸⁸ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1905).

⁴⁸⁹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1924), 24; and (1925).

⁴⁹⁰ *The Boston Public Library: A Handbook to the Library Building, Its Mural Decorations and Its Collections* (Boston: Association Publications, 1930), 62.

⁴⁹¹ Whitehill, *Centennial History*, 219.

⁴⁹² Fox & Gale, "Drawings for Alterations of Certain Rooms," set of 9 drawings, no. 5001, Job. 1668 (10 September 1926), BPL 24.

⁴⁹³ Fox & Gale, "Alterations of Certain Rooms," set of 15 drawings, no. 12, (November 1928), BPL 24.

⁴⁹⁴ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1915).

⁴⁹⁵ *The Boston Public Library* (1921), 58.

⁴⁹⁶ Small (1895), 64 and H.L.S., "A Wonderful Structure."

⁴⁹⁷ Garnsey, 1021.

⁴⁹⁸ Small (1895), 64-65.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., 63.

⁵⁰⁰ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1905).

⁵⁰¹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1897), 14.

⁵⁰² Small (1899), 66.

⁵⁰³ Fox & Gale, "Drawings for Alterations of Certain Rooms: Barton Ticknor Room: West Wall Elevation" Job 1668, no. 5008 (10 September 1926), BPL 24.

⁵⁰⁴ Fox & Gale, "Alterations of Certain Rooms: New Music Room—Old Barton Ticknor Room," no. 5 (November 1928), BPL 24.

⁵⁰⁵ City of Boston Contract w/ Dominic A. Gentile for "Certain Painting." Drawings files at the Boston Public Library.

⁵⁰⁶ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1974-75), 12.

⁵⁰⁷ Small (1895), 65.

⁵⁰⁸ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1897), 14.

⁵⁰⁹ *Casual Tour*, 7.

⁵¹⁰ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1930), 27; and (1933), 18.

⁵¹¹ Ames, Child & Graves, "Alterations to Exhibition Room," (2 December 1940), BPL 41.

⁵¹² Ames & Graves, "Miscellaneous Installations, Alterations & Repairs," Job 903 (26 November 1962), BPL 41.

⁵¹³ *Casual Tour*, 11-13.

⁵¹⁴ Architects Design Group, "Diorama Room" (15 June 1965), BPL 41.

⁵¹⁵ Ames, Child & Graves, "New Lighting Fixtures in Wiggin Room," no. 3 (18 August 1953; Rev. 29 June 1953) BPL 41.

⁵¹⁶ McKim, Mead & White, "Gallery on Special Library Floor," no. 536 (16 April 1892), BPL 41.

⁵¹⁷ Ames, Child & Graves, "Alterations to Exhibition Room: Balcony Plan", no. 2 (2 December 1940); Ames, Child & Graves, "Alterations to Office of Curator of Prints," (15 August 1947, Reissued 21 June 1948), BPL 41.

⁵¹⁸ Swift, 269.

⁵¹⁹ Small (1895), 65.

⁵²⁰ Collections gathered from BPL Handbooks 1899-1930.

⁵²¹ "The Boston Public Library Building: An Abstract of the Controversy," 297.

⁵²² Walker, 239.

⁵²³ The first Architectural Library was supposed to be in the location of the Music Room (see "Music Room"). Later, it was slated to be in the location of the Fine Arts Reading Room.

⁵²⁴ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1896), 18.

⁵²⁵ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1907), 12.

⁵²⁶ Fox & Gale, "Proposed Reconstruction West & South Galleries," no. E.7 (April 1931), BPL 24; and Fox, Jenney & Gale, "Plan of Special Library Floor and Annex Top Floor" no. 7 (March 1940), BPL 13.

⁵²⁷ Fox & Gale, "Alterations of Certain Rooms," no. 1 (Nov 1928), BPL 24.

- ⁵²⁸ Fox, Jenney & Gale, "Plan of Special Library Floor and Annex Top Floor," no. 7 (March 1940), BPL 13.
- ⁵²⁹ Fox & Gale, "Alterations of Certain Rooms," set of 15 drawings, (Nov 1928), BPL 24.
- ⁵³⁰ Fox & Gale, "Office at West End of North Gallery" (28 August 1934), BPL 24.
- ⁵³¹ City of Boston Contract w/ Dominic A. Gentile for "Certain Painting," 13.
- ⁵³² Ibid.
- ⁵³³ BPL Trustees' Annual Reports (1923) and (1928).
- ⁵³⁴ Fox & Gale, "Proposed Reconstruction West & South Galleries," no. E.7 (April 1931), BPL 24.
- ⁵³⁵ Ames & Graves, "Modernization of Fine Arts, Science & Technology Dept.," set of 3 drawings, Job 905 (21 August 1964), BPL 24.
- ⁵³⁶ Some of Poole's other criticisms in this interview are discussed in Section 6.2 of this report.
- ⁵³⁷ Jordy, 326 footnote – On pages 321-328 Jordy also provides a brief history of the development of library design.
- ⁵³⁸ H.L.S., *Newton Circuit* (February 1, 1895).
- ⁵³⁹ Swift, 26.
- ⁵⁴⁰ Jordy, 328.
- ⁵⁴¹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1898).
- ⁵⁴² BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1905, 1907).
- ⁵⁴³ Lord, 246.
- ⁵⁴⁴ BPL Drawing Archive 10 & 19.

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- ⁵⁴⁵ Stull Associates, Inc., i.
- ⁵⁴⁶ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1973-1974), 5-6. This Annual Report details consequences of Johnson Building with regards to space and programmatic considerations.
- ⁵⁴⁷ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1974-1975), 10-11.
- ⁵⁴⁸ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1979-1980), 13.
- ⁵⁴⁹ Stull Associates, Inc., 1.
- ⁵⁵⁰ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1981-1982), 22.
- ⁵⁵¹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1983-1984), 39.
- ⁵⁵² Ibid., 57.
- ⁵⁵³ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1986-1987), 44.
- ⁵⁵⁴ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1991-1992), 9.

⁵⁵⁵ Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott (SBRA), Section 02080, Phase I Part B Specifications.

⁵⁵⁶ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1976), 22.

⁵⁵⁷ SBRA, Section 04510, Phase I Part B Specs.

⁵⁵⁸ SBRA, "Demolition of Ground Floor," no. A1.2.

⁵⁵⁹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1974-1975), 12.

⁵⁶⁰ SBRA, Section 04510, Phase I Part B Specifications.

⁵⁶¹ BPL Trustees' Annual Report (1974-1975), 13.

⁵⁶² SBRA, Section 04510, Phase I Part B Specifications.

⁵⁶³ BPL Trustees' Annual Report, (1974-1975), 13.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid., 12.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid., 13.

⁵⁶⁶ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties," Preservation Assistance Brochure, 1992.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.

